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THE STONELEIGH PROJECT:
A CASE STUDY OF OUTDOOR YOUTH WORK AND ITS
IMPACT ON PERSONAL AND SOCIAL
TRANSFORMATION

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Abstract

This research is a case study of the Stoneleigh Group; a partnership of voluntary youth work organisations that piloted a spiritual development programme for young people aged 18 to 25. The purpose of the research was to examine the claims made by the Stoneleigh Group to have developed a radical approach and outcomes of personal and social transformation within a programme of informal education out of doors. The research was undertaken in the contexts of reviews of research concerning outdoor education, informal education for young people, and youth transition. An ethnographic study of the retreat programme and its impact on the lives of the young people was combined with a critical study of the advocacy work of the Stoneleigh Group within the development of the National Youth Work Curriculum. The analysis was undertaken with the aid of Bernstein's theoretical framework for curriculum and pedagogic critique. The study of the programme claims that the pedagogic approach was radical in its ideology and practice. However, it is argued that the impact on the young people depended on the ideology of the youth organisation for which they volunteered. A range of claims for a radical outcome are identified and discussed. The research argues that, despite the claim that the outcomes of social transformation were only partially achieved, the practices of the Stoneleigh Group were contested because of their perceived radicalism. The study of the advocacy work suggests that, despite these challenges, the Stoneleigh Group's contributions to the national discussions concerning the spiritual development of young people within the youth work curriculum resulted in proposals that supported a more radical pedagogic approach than currently practised. The research indicates that the Stoneleigh Group influenced statements made in the consultation. It is argued that the Group provided support for the concept of young people as agents of social change. In particular, it is suggested that the pilot was used to support a view of young people as capable of, and valued for, their challenges to the established norms of society.

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Sue Bennett was inspirational as a youth worker with Eden Community Outdoors. She epitomised all that motivated me to take an interest in the radical potential of this field. This thesis is dedicated to her.

Author's Declaration

This research builds on an evaluative study, *The Stoneleigh Group Pilot Programme: An Evaluation*, (Loynes, 2004) undertaken on behalf of the Stoneleigh Group. The research asks different questions for a different purpose and involved the collection of additional evidence and an extended period of field research. Some of the material in Chapter 5 was included as part of a book chapter, *Social Reform, Militarism and Other Historical Influences on the Practice of Outdoor Education in Youth Work* (Loynes, 2007).

Two conference presentations were made that explored the early findings from this research. The first was entitled 'Power With or Power Over: A Case Study of Emerging Voices Within an Outdoor Experience' and was presented at 'Widening Horizons', the Third International Conference of Outdoor Education at the University of Central Lancashire in July 2006. The second was called 'Agents of Change or Coming in from the Cold: A Case Study of Developing Narratives in an Outdoor Experience' at the 10th International Conference for Experiential Learning at Lancaster University in July 2006. Neither of these presentations was published.

The thesis is based on my own research and is all my own work. Quotes from other sources are referenced and quoted evidence is identified with a code that corresponds with the source in the evidence database.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Author's Declaration	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	ix
 Chapter 1	
Introduction	1
The Aims of the Research	2
Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5: Contexts for the Research	4
Chapters 6 and 7: The Research Approach	6
Chapter 8: A Theoretical Framework	7
Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13: Discussion	8
Chapter 14: Conclusions	11
The Multiple Roles of the Researcher	11
The Use of Pseudonyms for the Participants	12
Coding the Evidence	12
Conclusion	12
 Chapter 2	
Introducing the Stoneleigh Group and the Stoneleigh Project	14
The Stoneleigh Group	14
The Young People	24
The Stoneleigh Project	25
The Evaluation Study	31
Conclusion	37

Chapter 3	A Review of Outdoor Education Research	39
	Outdoor Education: Early Claims	40
	Emerging Research Findings Criticised	41
	The Meta-Studies Reviewed	41
	Recent research reviewed	44
	Locating this Study within the Wider Research on Outdoor Education	56
Chapter 4	Youth, Transition and Agency	58
	Youth in Context	59
	The Vulnerability of Youth	63
	Youth Transitions	68
	Youth Transition as Problem	74
	Youth Development	76
	Transition and Risk, Structure and Agency	79
	Conclusion	86
Chapter 5	Youth Development and Informal Education	89
	Colonisation and Tradition	89
	Historical Influences	91
	The New Individualism and Outdoor and Informal Education	110
	Conclusion	119
Chapter 6	Arriving at a Methodology	123
	Finding a Philosophical Position	123
	The Contribution of Narrative	130
	Reflexivity	133
	An Ethnographic Approach	133
	Entering the Field Co-operatively and Critically	135
	Criticality	137
	A Grounded Approach	139

	Adopting Critical, Interpretative, Hermeneutic and Ethnographic Approaches to the Case Study	139
Chapter 7	A Review of the Methods of Inquiry	142
	A Structure for the Inquiry	142
	Focus 1: An Ethnography of the Stoneleigh Project Programme	146
	Focus 2: The Impact of the Stoneleigh Project on the Young People	160
	Focus 3: A Critical Analysis of the Struggle for the Meaning and Dissemination of the Findings of the Stoneleigh Project	162
	Ethical Considerations	163
	Reflexivity	165
	Benefits and Dilemmas	166
	Conclusion	170
Chapter 8	Knowledge, Power and Control in Education: Theoretical Perspectives	172
	The Underlying Principles of Bernstein's Theories	176
	The Current Relevance of Bernstein's Ideas	180
	Bernstein's Theories and the Stoneleigh Project	184
	The Genesis of Values	195
	Conclusion	199
Chapter 9	The Ideologies of the Stoneleigh Group and its Partners	201
	Youth and Transition	204
	Marginalisation	209
	The Stoneleigh Group and the Meaning of Work	222
	Conclusion	228

Chapter 10	The Participants' Experience of the Stoneleigh Project Retreats	231
	The Retreat Programme	232
	The Young Participants	238
	The Retreat Experience	244
	Conclusion	267
Chapter 11	The Role of Narrative in the Stoneleigh Project	270
	Recruitment	271
	Creating Discourse	273
	Constructing and Reconstructing Identity	274
	Experiencing Agency	279
	Learning Narrative Skills	280
	Transformation	281
	Conclusion	283
Chapter 12	The Stoneleigh Project and its Influence on the Lives of the Young Participants after the Retreats	285
	The Stoneleigh Project Programme after the Retreats	285
	Agents of Personal Change	301
	Personal or Social Change Agents	308
	The Young People of the Stoneleigh Project as Agents of Social Change.	316
	Conclusion	320
Chapter 13	Ideological Struggles: The Spirituality Concept and Informal Education	322
	Spirituality and the Stoneleigh Group Partners	323
	An Integrated Code and the Threat to Power.	326
	The Struggle between the Programme Staff and the Stoneleigh Group Partners.	330
	Leadership as a Colonising Influence: the struggle amongst the Stoneleigh Group partners.	335
	The Struggle for Ideas after the Stoneleigh Project.	340

	Unravelling the Conflation of Values, Spirituality and Religion.	342
Chapter 14	Conclusions	346
	Questions One and Two: The Integrated Curriculum and Pedagogy of the Retreats.	346
	Question Three: Agency and the Reproduction and Transformation of Social Order.	353
	Question Four: The Struggle to Break Out of a Liberal 'Papering Over of the Cracks'.	359
	Questions for Further Study.	362
	References	364
Appendix 1	The Backgrounds to Participants in the Text.	374
Appendix 2	Sources of Evidence Used in this Thesis.	378
Appendix 3	A Personal Narrative in the Context of the Study of The Stoneleigh Project.	383
Appendix 4	A Summary of the Work of the Stoneleigh Group Partners.	393
Appendix 5	The Four Umbrellas of the Stoneleigh Group and its Network.	398

List of Diagrams and Tables

Chapter 2

Table 1	The Stoneleigh Project: Calendar of Events	22
---------	--	----

Table 2	The Formal Roles of the Participants within the Stoneleigh Group	24
---------	--	----

Chapter 7

Table 3	Research Calendar	143
---------	-------------------	-----

Chapter 10

Table 4	Summary of 12 ‘Case Study’ Young Participants’ Perceived Situations Before the Stoneleigh Project	239
---------	---	-----

Chapter 12

Table 5	Summary of the Effect of the Stoneleigh Project on the Identity and Trajectory of the 12 Case Study Young People	287
---------	--	-----

Diagram 1	Trajectories of the Young Participants in the Stoneleigh Project Showing the Representative Pathways of the 12 Participants Analysed as Case Studies.	291
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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Introduction

This thesis is a critical ethnographic study of the Stoneleigh Group and the programme of informal education that it piloted for young people. The programme, which took place between 2000 and 2004, was called the Stoneleigh Project. It was a pilot programme of experiential approaches to what the Stoneleigh Group called informal education. It was designed to support what was referred to by the Stoneleigh Group as the 'spiritual development' of marginalised young people volunteering as youth workers. Its aim was to help them become agents of social change in their communities. The Stoneleigh Group considered the approach and the outcomes of the programme to be radical both pedagogically and politically.

The Stoneleigh Group was a partnership between a number of voluntary youth work organisations and educational charities. It was founded by Endeavour Training and the Rank Foundation specifically to develop the Stoneleigh Project. The Stoneleigh Group had the aims of developing best practice for spiritual development using the outdoors, disseminating this practice to other youth work organisations, and advocating for spiritual development as a part of the youth work curriculum. The Stoneleigh Group operated from 2000 to 2004 and advocacy work on behalf of the Group continued until 2006.

I have been involved in outdoor education for 34 years. One of my longstanding interests concerns programmes designed to use the outdoors for the personal development of marginalised young people. More recently, I have taken an interest in outdoor programmes that make claims to take a radical approach by addressing what are thought of as the causes of marginalisation as well as helping those who are perceived as marginalised. My interest in radical practices led me to undertake evaluative studies of two organisations that became members of the Stoneleigh Group. This in turn led to an invitation to evaluate the

Stoneleigh Project. From this work I became interested in conducting a critical sociological inquiry of the processes and outcomes of the Stoneleigh Project. This is the basis for the research study described in this thesis.

The Aims of the Research

The aims of this research are to examine the claims made by the Stoneleigh Group that they would support the development of young people as agents of social change and that their programme was a radical approach with radical outcomes. The Stoneleigh Group used terms such as 'empowerment' and 'transformation' to describe the outcomes they were seeking. This in itself was a departure from the conventional term of 'development' more widely used in the modern youth service and in informal education out of doors. These terms imply a radical approach to education and so this research set out to examine the pedagogy and curriculum of the programme in depth in order to explore these claims. In particular, I was interested in the knowledge and values developed through the Stoneleigh Project and how these were understood to support young people in transcending their marginalised circumstances. I was also curious about the educational process and what aspects of this were thought to help the young people to transform their own circumstances and contribute to the transformation of the social circumstances that had led to their marginalisation.

The term 'informal education' is used to define the practice of the Stoneleigh Project. Increasingly, this term is used to describe unplanned learning wherever it occurs, commonly in the context of the private and social lives of learners but also the informal learning that occurs around educational activities, rather than as an intended aspect of a planned educational intervention. It is increasingly suggested that the appropriate term for planned interventions with clear purposes that is applied throughout Europe and increasingly adopted in the UK for projects such as the Stoneleigh Project is 'non-formal education' (Colley et al., 2003; Festu and Humberstone, 2006). However, the members of the Stoneleigh Group, along with a number of authors on youth work widely referred to by members of the Group especially Jeffs and Smith (1999), use the former term. So, in spite of the criticisms to the theoretical ideas of Jeffs and Smith (for example Ord, 2007) 'informal education' is adopted in the thesis for the sake of coherence.

This thesis inquires into a number of themes. It begins by examining the pedagogic practices of the pilot programme and especially the outdoor retreat element of the Stoneleigh Project. The Stoneleigh Group partner involved in the initial piloting of the retreats held radical views socially and politically and these, it was claimed, also underpinned the values of the community that the Stoneleigh Project joined on retreat. I wanted to examine the claims made by this part of the programme and the impact that it had on the young people involved.

The Stoneleigh Group believed that marginalised young people were seeking a degree of agency in constructing their adult identities and that they would then use this agency to confront what they considered to be some of the inequitable features of modern society. The research therefore also studies the perceived effect of this programme on the identities and transitions to adulthood of the young people involved. It then examines the claim made by the Stoneleigh Group that the programme enhanced the sense of agency of the young people and asks whether this agency was directed at the reproduction or transformation of their personal and social situations. That is, I wanted to know whether the programme did in fact support these young people in becoming agents of personal and social change. Keeping in mind the radical claims of the Stoneleigh Group for the programme's approach, it was likely that knowledge and values would be co-constructed from various sources, specific to each individual and made meaningful in diverse ways, the questions I set out to answer were:

What knowledge and values were considered significant by the participants in the Stoneleigh Project?

In what way was that knowledge gained and given voice?

Who exactly did this empower, on whose behalf, and to what end?

As the work of the Stoneleigh Group entered the dissemination and advocacy stages I argue that a second site of pedagogic activity was created. This second pedagogic site concerned the partners in the Stoneleigh Group developing their knowledge and values of the way in which the Stoneleigh Project influenced the young people and advocating this approach amongst the partner organisations and the youth work field. This site became a site of struggle involving organisations both internal and external to the Stoneleigh Group. At first, the struggle concerned the meaning and application of the programme and, later, involved a struggle for the control of the understanding of the Stoneleigh Project and its use in influencing youth work policy. This led to a fourth question:

How did the struggle for the control of the Stoneleigh Project illuminate the politics of radical curriculum development that was aimed at social transformation?

The outcomes of these analyses are discussed in the context of the role of education in maintaining and transforming the social order in society. To help with this critical approach I draw on the concept of power. Power was important in the pedagogic relationships of the programme and the development and ownership of knowledge and values. It was therefore a central concept with which to explore the dynamics of the programme. I also use power to explore the young people's experiences of empowerment and agency and their impact upon the young people's efforts to transform their marginalised circumstances and to construct adult identities. Power was also significant in relation to the development of the political voices of the young people in the construction of an adult identity congruent with their emerging values, and, in particular, when their values were at odds with the established values of the institutions of society. Lastly, power was central to the struggle that took place over the meaning and application of the pilot programme in relation to wider recommendations made for radical pedagogic approaches for spiritual development in youth work.

Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5: Contexts for the Research

The Stoneleigh Project was an example of what the Stoneleigh Group termed 'informal education' for young people. It sought to develop a programme that could address some of

the problems of transition from youth to adult for marginalised young people in British society. Outdoor retreats and voluntary work opportunities were central to this programme. As such, this research study sits in a number of different contexts. These include aspects of youth work, concepts of youth in society, and approaches to what was called by the Stoneleigh Group informal and outdoor education. A discussion of current thinking concerning these areas provides a framework for understanding the Stoneleigh Project. It will also enable the research findings to be considered in the context of the historical and cultural influences on the field.

The first of these contexts is what in this thesis is referred to as informal education out of doors, which I review in Chapter 3. Outdoor Education is a relatively new profession and research in this field is still rather patchy. A recent meta-study concluded that future research could usefully focus on a number of these unexplored areas (Rickinson et al., 2004). This, the authors suggested, would include studies that paid attention to the outdoor experience from the point of view of the participants and that examined the pedagogic processes that take place in the outdoors by the in-depth study of practice. Since Rickinson *et al's* study, research has been published that has begun to consider the processes involved in outdoor education. A number of these have taken an ethnographic approach and, in particular, have examined the meaning of the experiences to the participants. Other studies have begun a critical examination of outdoor education in its cultural and historical contexts.

The second context, considered in Chapter 4, is that of theories about youth, youth transition, and youth agency. Ideas about youth in modern society suggest that the increasingly diverse nature of this society and its rate of change have increased the discontinuity between one generation and the next. It is argued that this, combined with the liberal values of the culture, has led to an increased emphasis on the role of the individual in constructing an identity and managing the transition from youth to adult (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Roche and Tucker, 1997). At the same time a number of factors have led to what is called the 'risk society' in which people are aware of risks that they face on a global scale, for example nuclear war, but have little or no opportunity as they perceive it to control these risks. On a personal scale, Raffo and Reeves (2000) suggest that the risks

involved in constructing an identity are also increasingly out of the control of some individuals. An extended period of youth, now considered by some including the Stoneleigh Group partners to last until twenty five years of age, has created a space within which it is claimed that more young people, especially those marginalised by social and educational factors, struggle to find a pathway to adulthood. Chapter 4 reviews this literature further. Critics claim that the Youth Service has yet to respond coherently with effective policies and programmes to support young people during this stage in their lives (ESRC Youth Research Programme; 2002; Griffin, 1997; Jeffs and Smith, 2002).

Finally, youth work in the voluntary sector in the UK has a long history rooted in social initiatives to address the perceived social, economic and moral problems of the time. Many of these early social reformers were motivated by political or religious convictions. This history, which includes a longstanding tradition of outdoor youth work, is reviewed in Chapter 5. It provides a context for examining ideological influences on the voluntary organisations of the Stoneleigh Group later in the study.

Chapters 6 and 7: The Research Approach

I followed the Stoneleigh Project from its first pilot in 2000 through to the recent advocacy work conducted in 2006 after the Stoneleigh Project ended. As I have indicated above, I claim that two pedagogic processes were at work. As outlined above, the first concerned the young people and the support they received in constructing their identities in the transition from youth to adult. The second concerned the evaluation and advocacy work of the partners. Both involved experiential and social processes that led to the construction of meaning and attempts to encourage a discourse with the everyday world with the intention of bringing about change. Methodologically, the research study was a hermeneutic inquiry focussed on education and power.

For this research I adopted an ethnographic approach to the Stoneleigh Group. This allowed me to participate in the Stoneleigh Project in order to collect the evidence. It also provided a framework that allowed for a wide range of techniques in collecting data. A

critical stance then enabled me to analyse this evidence in the context of the claims made by the Stoneleigh Group for radical social outcomes.

The methodological approach I have taken is explored in Chapter 6 and the details of the methods used in this study are reviewed in Chapter 7. Appendix 3 provides a reflexive biographical account of my personal and professional experiences outdoors so that readers will be aware of the perspective from which I have approached this study.

Chapter 8: A Theoretical Framework

The educational theories of Bernstein are used to explore the pedagogy of the Stoneleigh Project in the context of power and knowledge in society (Bernstein, 1996). Bernstein was concerned with the role of education within a democracy in providing an equitable distribution of power and resources in society. He understood the process by which education contributes to the construction of an adult identity as central to this. He was also sceptical of the degree to which education was fulfilling its ideals. He developed theories to help in the analysis of curricula and pedagogic practices so that the ways in which the distribution of power were maintained or changed by educational practices could be explored. These theories provide useful tools with which to analyse the Stoneleigh Project.

Bernstein used the term 'knowledge' in a generic sense. As the Stoneleigh Project focussed on values as well as knowledge I have supplemented Bernstein's ideas with the theories offered by Joas (2000) about the development of values in society. Both authors explore their subjects from the point of view of the processes by which individuals construct an adult identity. They are both concerned with the development of the citizen as an active agent in the reproduction and transformation of society and both share a concern for processes that marginalise people from engaging in this process. Also, they share the view that society is in need of transformation. The relevant theories of both authors are outlined in Chapter 8.

Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13: Discussion

Those members of the Stoneleigh Group with an interest in 'spiritual development' in youth work claimed that inequalities and injustices in British society and beyond require the transformation of our social values and practices. Some went further, arguing for political and economic transformations. They saw this as a time of great threats but also of great opportunities for individuals to act. 'Agency' then had two meanings for these members of the Stoneleigh Group. First, they believed agency concerns the way in which young people can be encouraged to take responsibility for constructing their own identities in a plural and rapidly changing world. In the case of marginalised young people this was thought to involve supporting the young people in restoring themselves to constructive paths to work and to adulthood.

Second, the partners in the Stoneleigh Group understood agency as part of the process of being actively involved in contributing to the construction of a society that is based on a different set of values and practices. This, they thought, would involve the development of different identities in work and civic society as well as new forms of work and civic action that challenged the inequities in that society. In addition, the idea of agency was conflated with ideas of spirituality by combining the ability to act with a moral centre from which to judge these actions. The five chapters critiquing the practices and consequences of the Stoneleigh Group and the Stoneleigh Project are outlined below.

Chapter 9: The Ideologies of the Stoneleigh Group Partners

The purpose of Chapter 9 is to clarify the ideologies and philosophies of the Stoneleigh Group and its partners. This will help with the understanding in later chapters of how these beliefs interacted; both between the partners in the Stoneleigh Group and with other youth work institutions. To help clarify the thinking of the Stoneleigh Group partner organisations and how these compared with the Stoneleigh Group itself, the discussion in this chapter is arranged into three themes. These were central to the discussions held by the Stoneleigh Group as the Stoneleigh Project was being developed. The first concerns the various ways in which the partners in the Stoneleigh Group and the Group itself understood the terms 'youth' and 'transition'. The different ideas held by each partner in

relation to the ideas of youth transition also influenced their practice and thinking in relation to the two other themes of 'marginalisation' and 'the meaning of work'.

The various ideologies of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group emerge from this analysis. This helps with the understanding of what constituted radical practices and outcomes to each of them and to what degree their positions were congruent with the more radical aims of the Stoneleigh Group to which they belonged.

Chapter 10: Analysing the Pedagogy of the Retreats

Chapter 10 examines the nature of the pedagogy and curriculum of the retreat programme. The Stoneleigh Group thought that the retreats were significant aspects of an approach to what they called informal education that they considered as radical in terms of both the process and the outcome. This research study is concerned with this claim for a radical approach and so an ethnographic study of power and knowledge within the retreat experience is analysed in detail using Bernstein's (1996) theoretical tools.

I will argue that the retreats were indeed radical in their approach and transformative in their effect upon the trajectories of the young people. In relation to this aspect of the programme the Stoneleigh Group did what it claimed to be doing.

Chapter 11: The Significance of Narrative as a Pedagogic Tool

In Chapter 11 I consider the way in which narrative worked as a pedagogic device during and after the retreat programme. I argue that learning how to construct and tell stories about their experiences and aspirations was a critical skill in helping some of the young people to escape the causes of their marginalisation and to transform the opportunities available to them. I suggest it gave some of them a perception of power over what experiences meant to them, how they understood themselves, and how others understood them. I also suggest that the skill of narrative had an impact on the actions that some were able to take and the degree of agency they felt that they had in their transitions to adulthood.

Chapter 12: The Influence of the Stoneleigh Project on the Trajectories of the Young People

The nature and degree of transformation attributed to the Stoneleigh Project by the young people is discussed in Chapter 12. The Stoneleigh Project intended to facilitate young people in finding pathways to adulthood that fulfilled their aspirations personally, socially and politically. As has been outlined above, the purpose of the programme was to help transform the marginalised situations of the young people and then, through them, contribute to a transformation of society. This chapter examines how, in practice, the young people used the experience to support their transitions to adulthood.

In many cases the lives of the young people were transformed as they became more socially mobile, escaped marginalising circumstances, and sought adult roles in their communities. These young people attributed these outcomes to the Stoneleigh Project. Most adopted conventional pathways to adult identities in their work and social lives. Some set out to become youth workers and so tackle the consequences of marginalisation on others. A few set out to transform the community that they belonged to, the community's attitudes to young people and the work that was available to them. In chapter 12 I examine the influences on the pathways that the young people followed and the degree to which these various pathways to adulthood were affected by the Stoneleigh Project and were congruent with its aims.

Chapter 13: Examining the Ideological Struggles for the Meaning of the Stoneleigh Project

Whatever the outcomes were in practice, the Stoneleigh Group made claims for both a radical practice and radical outcomes. In Chapter 13 I examine the politics of advocacy for radical pedagogic practice within the voluntary organisation of the Stoneleigh Group and between the Group and the youth work world. The pedagogic site of the Stoneleigh Project became a site of struggle amongst the Stoneleigh Group for the control of the concepts being developed. This had a significant effect on the dissemination of the emerging practice. In addition, a struggle occurred between those members of the Stoneleigh Group who undertook the advocacy work and some of the organisations outside of the Stoneleigh Group that these people were seeking to influence. Nevertheless, the Stoneleigh Group

claim to have influenced the published findings of the National Youth Agency review (Green, 2006) exploring spirituality in youth work towards a more radical stance.

Chapter 14: Conclusions

Chapter 14 draws my findings together by addressing the four questions outlined above that framed the research study. This includes findings from the study that consider the meaning of marginalisation from the perspective of young people and the Stoneleigh Group, a review of the outcomes from the study concerning the questions related to personal and social transformation, and a summary of the study's arguments discussing the nature and degree of radicalism of the work of the Stoneleigh Group. I conclude that many aspects of the Stoneleigh Project, and especially the retreats, were radical and did have a transformative effect on the identities of many of the young people. However, I will also suggest that, whilst the Stoneleigh Group did support many instances of personal transformation, it did not always achieve its aim of supporting the young people to become agents of social change. Most young people helped to reproduce rather than transform the established power structures of society. I consider why this was so and why some young people did make a political difference and were able to disrupt some of the processes in their community that led to the marginalisation of young people.

The Multiple Roles of the Researcher

My involvement with the Stoneleigh Group began as the evaluator of the Stoneleigh Project. Shortly after beginning this task I asked if it was acceptable to the Stoneleigh Group if I also used the evaluative data and extended my study for the research purposes of this thesis. The dual roles involved in taking this approach added a level of complexity to the study that is discussed further in Chapter 7. The data for the evaluative study involved an interpretation of the pedagogic processes of the programme and the learning outcomes for the young participants as understood by all the participants in the Stoneleigh Project. The findings of this study are published in the evaluation report (Loynes, 2004b). This evidence was then incorporated into the research data for a critical analysis of the pedagogy of the Stoneleigh Project and the Stoneleigh Group partners, the life stories of the young participants and the advocacy work of the Stoneleigh Group.

The Use of Pseudonyms for the Participants

The names of all participants who are not associated with work that is in the public domain are given pseudonyms in order to protect their confidentiality. These pseudonyms are linked to the backgrounds of the participants and their roles in the Stoneleigh Group as explained in Appendix 1. The different roles held by participants in the conduct of the work of the Stoneleigh Group and the terms used to identify these roles are outlined in the first part of Chapter 2 and, in particular, in Table 2. The term 'participants' is used in this study to refer to everyone who participated in this research. Most were initially involved in the co-operative inquiry linked to the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project. The remainder of the people involved as subjects in this research were participants in the last year of the piloting and people involved in the wider network of the Stoneleigh Group not previously observed or interviewed. Everyone was aware that they were the subjects of this research study and gave their consent for the evidence presented in this thesis to be used.

Coding the Evidence

Evidence used in this study comes from a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Some is quoted. Most is summarised or interpreted in the text. To maintain the flow of the text for the reader the sources of the evidence used are coded. These codes are given in the text when a quotation is introduced. The codes are explained in Appendix 2.

Conclusion

By taking an ethnographic approach to examining the pedagogy of the Stoneleigh Project this thesis will identify a number of aspects of the programme, and especially the outdoor retreats, that can be considered radical approaches to the transformation of marginalised young people. In considering the claims made by the Stoneleigh Group I will argue that the Stoneleigh Project not only had radical elements in its pedagogic practice but that, with the support of one of the partner organisations, it did support some young people in becoming agents of social change. However, I will claim that the evidence indicates that most young people, having transformed their personal circumstances, reproduced conventional pathways to adulthood.

In relation to the advocacy work, the Stoneleigh Group aspired to influence the emerging curriculum for spirituality in youth work and for the Stoneleigh Project to become a benchmark of good practice. I will argue that, with regard to these aims, there are grounds for thinking that they were successful.

Chapter 2:

The Stoneleigh Group and the Stoneleigh Project

Introduction

This thesis focuses upon the work of a network of voluntary youth agencies called the Stoneleigh Group and an informal outdoor education project that they developed. The network set out to explore whether a retreat-based approach to the outdoors could help with the transition of young people into adulthood and, in particular, if it could support marginalised young people in becoming agents of social change.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the Stoneleigh Group. It existed for five years from 2000 to 2004. This chapter provides a brief history of the origins of the Stoneleigh Group and outlines the Stoneleigh Project that was its main activity. The way the Stoneleigh Group understood its own structure and the roles of the people within are also explained. The second part of the chapter expands in more detail on the Stoneleigh Project, especially the retreats, and summarises some of the key results from the evaluation reports of interest to this thesis.

Quotations verbatim from the evidence of participants are indented when appropriate. In all these cases the source of the evidence is identified with a code. The meaning of the code and the sources of evidence are identified and explained in Appendix 2. This will sometimes be summarised in the text to help the reader place the person in context without turning to the appendices. It is intended that this will maintain the necessary rigour without disrupting the flow of the reading.

The Stoneleigh Group

The Stoneleigh Group was founded by Endeavour Training, a voluntary youth organisation and the Rank Foundation, an educational charity, in 2000. Together they convened a consortium of organisations involved in youth development, referred to below as the

partners, in order to create the Stoneleigh Project. The name derived from the place where the Stoneleigh Group met in the facilities of the Arthur Rank Centre at Stoneleigh. Although the Stoneleigh Group is, on the one hand, a term used to describe the network of partner organisations, it had autonomy as a separate organisation making decisions and initiating actions on behalf of the work it was commissioned by the partners to undertake. As a result it is referred to in this thesis in the singular. The network is referred to as the Stoneleigh Group partners. The aim of the Stoneleigh Group was

... to develop a programme of spiritual development and volunteer youth work to support the development of marginalised young people as agents of social change.

[D-J02(1701)]

The Stoneleigh Group included the voluntary youth organisations the Arthur Rank Centre, Eden Community Outdoors, Endeavour Training, Focus, Mobex, The Prince's Trust, and Weston Spirit; the educational charities Brahma Kumaris, the Foundation for Outdoor Adventure, the Iona Community, and the Wrekin Trust; and Threshold, an educational consultancy organisation. The Stoneleigh Group was funded by Endeavour Scotland, The Leadership Trust and The Rank Foundation together with contributions from the member organisations. Appendix 4 summarises the origins, aims and practices of each of these organisations.

I am the proprietor of Threshold and was the Stoneleigh Project evaluator throughout the life of the Stoneleigh Group. This opportunity emerged after encountering the Stoneleigh Group during the planning for their first pilot retreat whilst I was working for the Iona Community to evaluate Camas, the retreat venue first used by the Stoneleigh Group.

In their early documents the Stoneleigh Group defined their core beliefs as:

Participants can, with help, become agents of change in themselves and their communities.

In order to achieve this each person must be internally motivated and have a sense of his or her values, purpose and direction.

[R-SG(1100)]

The Stoneleigh Group drew on the writing of John Garnett (1999), a former director of the Industrial Society, to make their case. He called for new approaches and ‘liberating leadership’ built on interconnected networks, mutual trust, values, integrity, shared beliefs and strong relationships, which allow for real progress in personal and organisational achievement. In particular the Group quoted this extract from Garnett’s paper:

British society as a whole, and many groups large and small within it, face rising alienation, cynicism and exclusion. Without a new, values-based approach to leadership, the risk of social disintegration is both real and urgent.

The roots of the latent crisis lie in our failure as individuals, in organisations and communities, to realise our potential. This is sometimes because people don’t recognise their own capabilities, sometimes because they are prevented from exploiting them. The result is a growing number of people who have lost their identity, purpose or framework for living. In addition, the response to global competitive pressures is a gradual decline into the realms of the unethical; in the absence of shared visions society is increasingly focusing on the short term and the narrow values of consumerism reign instead of values based on human dignity.

[John Garnett (1999) quoted in D-SG(1501)]

The Stoneleigh Group’s literature placed the Stoneleigh Project in the context of youth work by claiming that a central belief of theirs was the potential of young people to, *with help* (my emphasis), transform their personal and social circumstances and so make an important contribution to society. Phil, the founder of the Stoneleigh Group and also founder of Endeavour Training, wrote:

The objectives are to encourage an adventurous approach to the development of mind, body and spirit of young aspirant leaders, in particular by the introduction of dialogue between living values and everyday life; to encourage qualities such as love, peace, wisdom, strength and joy as the core for our inner selves.

This process will empower young people with a willingness to become role models to their peers for the new millennium.

It is also our intention that this embryonic initiative, which departs from standard practice, will grow and influence the wider voluntary youth sector, nurturing a more compassionate and mature type of leadership for the future.

[D-R01(0300)]

The Stoneleigh Group claimed this approach was counter to some of the other current constructions of young people. They stated that ‘at a time in our society when the period of youth has extended to 25 years and beyond, policy directs funding largely at young people as ‘student’, ‘labour’ or ‘problem’’ [R-C05(1000)]. They believed such policies ran the risk of ignoring and under-resourcing the opportunities for young people to express their citizenship through personal development and social action. They believed youth work provides a handrail and a safety net for some young people especially those that they believed were vulnerable. They believed there is a need for the wider development of youth activities, volunteering, mentoring and other intergenerational opportunities as part of this process. They claimed ‘informal educators can play their part by supporting active engagement in the community and the environment in a way that helps young people to find their own directions in social, moral and spiritual terms’. [R-C05(1000), p. 2]

For five years the Stoneleigh Group raised funds to pilot and develop the Stoneleigh Project and evaluate and disseminate this practice. Some partners, as part of a National Youth Agency consultation taking place at the initiative of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), also used the outcomes of the Stoneleigh Project to advocate for the place of spiritual development in the youth work curriculum.

Some partners were primarily involved in providing the Stoneleigh Project. Others helped identify and then support young volunteers and adult mentors through the programme. Another group were more involved in dissemination and advocacy work. Over 160 volunteers and mentors from nine different organisations had been involved by the time the Stoneleigh Project finished and this research was concluded. Initially Endeavour Training and then the Wrekin Trust provided administrative services and the work of the Stoneleigh Group was directed by a small management team chaired by Andy, an independent person. As the project evaluator I was part of this management team.

The Stoneleigh Group Partners and their Work

The partners in the Stoneleigh Group fell into two sets. The voluntary youth work organisations together with Camas, the youth centre of the Iona Community, and Threshold were interested in the development of a new educational approach on behalf of their young people. The educational charities were interested in what could be learned from this pilot about the spiritual development of young people that could inform policies and practices in the wider world of youth work.

The Voluntary Youth Work Organisations

Appendix 4 shows that the voluntary organisations that were partners in the Stoneleigh Group had a wide range of backgrounds, aims, strategies, client groups, sizes and locations. However, they hold several things in common. Social entrepreneurs founded them all, although these people were rooted in different eras and traditions of youth work practice. They are all concerned with supporting marginalised young people to engage successfully with adult life. They all make use of outdoor programmes as part of their approaches to informal education and they are all interested in the concept of spiritual development as a part of the process of youth development.

The Educational Charities

The educational charities are also diverse in their aims. Some are set up primarily to provide funding to projects they consider to be worthwhile. Others are concerned with the promotion of particular educational and, in one case, political beliefs. As with the

voluntary youth organisations, they were all established by social entrepreneurs, though again with diverse backgrounds. They are also all interested in supporting the development of young people and in the role of spiritual development in this process.

The Structure of the Stoneleigh Group

The Stoneleigh Group was loosely and dynamically bounded with mutual and hierarchical relations with other groups of a formal and informal nature. Some links were strong, established and regular. Others were weak, unfamiliar and occasional. Most individuals and organisations were located in several of these overlapping groups.

The model of the Stoneleigh Group's structure (Appendix 5: The Four Umbrellas of the Stoneleigh Group and its Network) was developed by the management team in order to help it in its task of thinking about its work. This was done after the first pilot project in order to become clearer about what certain terms meant, understand how individuals and groups related to each other, and clarify formal roles within the Stoneleigh Project to help manage these roles and relations. The terminology used in this thesis is the same as that used by the members of the Stoneleigh Group.

As shown in Appendix 5 the management team perceived the structure of the Stoneleigh Group and its relations with other organisations as a series of four overlapping umbrellas. The umbrellas were thought of as hierarchical with each higher level overarching the one below and extending beyond to other organisations/umbrellas outside the Stoneleigh

Group. Relationships between individuals and organisations at each umbrella level were thought of as mutual.

The Four Umbrellas

One set of individuals formed the lowest of the umbrellas; the management team. They directed the Stoneleigh Project. An individual from each of Endeavour Training, Weston Spirit, the Wrekin Trust and two from Threshold, plus a chair for the team, invited to fill the role on an independent basis, made up the Stoneleigh Project management team. They met at least four times per year. In practice these core individuals were committed to, and took responsibility for, the Stoneleigh Group's concept and maintained the support of their organisations.

A larger group of individuals and their organisations formed the second umbrella level. They actively participated as users of the Stoneleigh Project by sending young people and mentors to retreats and supporting them in advance and on return. They were involved in the development of the programme and took a close interest in the results both for their participants and in respect of the advocacy work. These constituted the Stoneleigh Group who gathered biannually at a forum.

A larger group of representatives of other youth work organisations constituted the third umbrella level. They were interested in participating in the future or offered support or services. They were consulted by the Stoneleigh Group and invited to forum and conference events. Lastly, the top umbrella was composed of a wider network of people and organisations interested in but not active in the work or who the Stoneleigh Group sought to influence. They were invited to conferences and kept informed in other ways.

Formal Events

The Stoneleigh Group organised certain events as its main formal activities. Some were developed in order to inform and consult interested parties about the Stoneleigh Project. Some were devices for advocacy work beyond the Stoneleigh Group. The management

team arranged biannual forums from 2000 to 2003 (see Table 1 below) in order to report back to the full Stoneleigh Group on the Stoneleigh Project and the ongoing evaluation work, and to inform and consult the Group on future plans. A conference was convened at the conclusion of each phase of funding in 2002 and 2004. These were held in order to report to, receive feedback from, and seek to influence, a wider community of people and organisations.

Advocacy Networks

The Stoneleigh Group set out to create a space in which a new form of youth work practice could be developed *via* a pilot project. They were successful in setting up an additional means of communication to that of the established channels within youth work networks. This included a considerable number of voluntary youth work organisations as well as youth work agencies for the statutory and voluntary sectors, academics, civil servants, and government ministers. Key events in this work were the two invitation conferences held by the Stoneleigh Group in February 2002 and May 2004 as shown in Table 1 below.

The theme that formed the focus of this network was that of how spiritual development for young people could be provided. The development of this theme through this network is one of the focuses of this research and will be considered in Chapter 13. At this point it is worth noting that it was an explicit aspiration of the Stoneleigh Group to influence practice and policy concerning spiritual development as part of the youth work curriculum at organisational and institutional levels. This network was developed in order to achieve this. The Stoneleigh Group wanted this influence to take the form of a dialogue and the desired outcome was to support the active development of spirituality in the youth work curriculum together with the dissemination of examples of good practice.

Table 1: The Stoneleigh Project: Calendar of Events

Date	Event
May 2000	The Stoneleigh Group is formed.
Sept. 2000	The first group of participants are invited to the first retreat at Camas, Isle of Mull, as a pilot.
Dec. 2000	The first Camas follow-up weekend, Silesian Sisters, Cumbria.
2001	Major funding secures the first phase of the project.
2001	The first Stoneleigh Group forum in Coventry.
May 2001	The second group of participants go to Camas.
Sept. 2001	The second Camas follow-up weekend, Global Retreat Centre, Oxford.
Sept. 2001	The third group of participants go to Camas.
Dec. 2001	The third Camas follow-up weekend.
Feb. 2002	The first round of evaluation is completed and the first conference is held at Stoneleigh.
Mar. 2002	A second round of funding launches the second phase of the project.
Apr. 2002	Paper given to conference at Brathay Hall, Cumbria.
Jul. 2002	Paper given at ESRC Young People's conference, Keele University.
Sept. 2002	The fourth and last group of participants go to Camas.
Feb. 2003	The second Stoneleigh Group Forum at Stoneleigh.
Apr. 2003	A training camp is held at Cae Mabon, Gwynedd.
Oct. 2003	A group of participants go to Gillerthwaite, Cumbria.

Dec. 2003	Gillerthwaite follow up weekend at Gillerthwaite.
Mar. 2004	A group of participants go to Cae Mabon.
May 2004	The second phase of evaluation is complete, a report produced and the second conference is held at The Global Retreat Centre in Oxford.

Roles

Various functional roles within the Stoneleigh Group emerged during the pilots of the Stoneleigh Project. These roles and the labels that were used by the Stoneleigh Group to define them are shown in Table 2 below.

This diversity of roles taken by different people is unusual in the informal educational practice of the Stoneleigh Group partners. The typical roles would be a youth worker, perhaps attempting to fulfil several or many of these roles, with one or more young people. Volunteers and mentors would sometimes enrich this arrangement. This model describes what the partners thought to be an unusual cross-generational mix and a gradation of roles from youth to adult. With the exception of managers and administrators all these roles were present during the retreats, one of the focuses of this research.

The term ‘participant’ in this thesis refers to anyone in the Stoneleigh Group who was involved in the co-operative inquiry that formed a central aspect of the evaluative study.

Table 2: The Formal Roles of the Participants within the Stoneleigh Group

Label	Role
Management group member	The people chosen to represent the Stoneleigh Group as a management team organising the projects, co-ordinating the evaluation, arranging other events, mailings and fund raising.
Administrator	Marketing, recruiting and co-ordinating the retreats and follow-up weekends.
Facilitators	The people who co-facilitate the retreats and follow-up weekends.
Volunteer hosts	The people who form the adult community hosting the young people and mentors on the retreats.
Mentors	The adults who act as the supporting bridge for the participants between the partner organisation and the retreats. Ideally these people attend the retreat.
Young people	The young people who have been invited for leadership development. They may be employees, volunteers or clients in the partner organisations.
Participants	All the above who were involved in the participative inquiry.
Evaluators	I, and on occasion others, who co-ordinated and undertook the evaluation of the Project.

Adapted from Management Report, Stoneleigh Group, 2003 [R-C05(6403)].

The Young People

The Stoneleigh Project was developed for marginalised young people who were potential leaders and volunteers within the network of voluntary organisations forming the Stoneleigh Group. It was felt that such people had a talent and enthusiasm for helping others, for making a contribution in various activities, had already displayed interest, aptitude and commitment in these areas, and had basic skills in youth work and personal development training.

The Stoneleigh Group sought out these young people within their organisations and set out to prepare them as peer educators, role models and community leaders capable of working in support of other young people. Their intention was to empower them by encouraging them to cultivate a greater sense of identity, self-worth and an ability to help others.

The Stoneleigh Project

The Stoneleigh Project consisted of a preparation phase arranged between the young people and their mentors and held within the voluntary youth organisation. This was followed by a retreat and follow up weekend and a mentored project back in the voluntary organisation. Young people, mentors, volunteer hosts, facilitators and evaluators attended the retreats. As the calendar of events shown in Table 1 above indicates, one cohort participated in the pilot Stoneleigh Project in 2000. Two more cohorts undertook the programme in 2001 and another in 2002. The last two cohorts completed their programmes in 2003 and 2004.

The first phase of funding in 2000 allowed the Stoneleigh Group to develop the Stoneleigh Project in collaboration with Camas, a residential retreat on the island of Mull and part of the Iona Community. Camas was chosen because of its reputation for spiritual development with young people, its claims to work in an egalitarian style, and its concerns with social justice. Being at Camas involves joining a group of young adult volunteers already in residence for the summer as an intentional reflective community. The Stoneleigh Group wished to explore this approach as a central part of its curriculum. The second phase of funding allowed the Stoneleigh Group to develop the retreats at other locations. These were populated entirely by Stoneleigh Group members.

As indicated above, the full programme of the Stoneleigh Project was intended to last for months or years and was meant to involve a mentored, volunteer role as well as community-based activities and residential retreats. The essential elements, as they were identified by those involved in the Stoneleigh Group after the first round of piloting, are listed in this extract below from the evaluation report.

The recipe can be summarised as made up of the following ingredients:

Selection: Choosing the volunteers that will benefit from the retreat and mentoring and choosing the mentors/elders to work with them. Volunteers lacking in confidence and direction but looking for a way to move forward had benefited most from the project in the way the Stoneleigh Group intended. Younger or more vulnerable participants had also benefited but not in the intended way. Mentors worked best when they were chosen by the volunteer and when they had a personal interest in the project.

Mentoring: The process of support before, during, and after the retreat had been varied and variously successful. When the mentor is chosen by the volunteer and the process is well established in a mutual sense of trust and respect then the best outcomes for the longest duration were obtained.

Remote and simple retreat: These elements allowed the people on retreat to encounter a more natural sense of themselves. There was time and dramatic surroundings to stimulate reflection. It offered a different way of being and space from which to reflect on the culture in which people were normally so embedded it was hard to gain perspective.

Community: Experiencing others living in a community of mutual respect provided the safe space, support, and expectation that the purpose of the retreat could be addressed. It also provided a clear example of how people might relate to each other and to the environment creating rich opportunities for ethical inquiry. The intergenerational membership, diversity of roles, and volunteer ethic all contributed to the quality of this aspect of the experience.

Mutuality: The style of living in the communities was egalitarian. This was found to be the most critical success factor. It helped establish a sense of trust, respect and mutuality. The twin tasks of working out how to live together (preparing meals, collecting firewood, cleaning, gardening) and co-creating a programme that addressed the purpose of the retreats (from the landscape around and the skills and

enthusiasms of the community members) made for a dynamic that effectively supported the project's purpose every time.

Follow up: The ways in which volunteers have accessed support after the retreats has been diverse partly from choice and partly from circumstance. The most consistently valued and used form of support has been the follow up weekends. Other approaches have included staying in touch with the mentors, joining in the programme of a different partner organisation, taking extension opportunities through the network within and beyond the group, and returning to the programme in a new role.

Politically engaged: A retreat on its own would be restorative or developmental but would not, perhaps, make such a consistent or direct impact on the roles the volunteers took in their communities. The context of the voluntary organisation and the mentor created and supported the expectation that the volunteers would act on their reflections. This might take the form of new projects or addressing unresolved personal problems or ambitions. Equally it could take the form of existing work entered into with different values and intentions.

[R-C05(6303)]

Whilst the residential retreats were consistently well attended the evaluation [R-C05(1000)] of this phase concluded that the length and quality of mentoring and volunteering after a retreat varied between individuals and organisations. The second phase of piloting set out to build on this early experience by attempting to develop the community based mentoring element and by experimenting with the retreat experience at venues other than Camas and run entirely by Stoneleigh Group people. It was this second phase of piloting that allowed me to continue to research the Stoneleigh Project and especially to explore the questions raised in this thesis by introducing a longitudinal study of the trajectories of some of the young people involved.

Spirituality, Leadership and a Curriculum of Values

In the early days of the development of the Stoneleigh Project values were thought of as the core curriculum and spirituality as an organising and promotional theme. For the Stoneleigh Project, this approach was initially determined by the need to reach young people who distrusted education, adults, and institutions. The intention was to give the young people a say in the curriculum of the programme and offer an experience that listened to the young people and their views of the world and role modelled a mutual style of relationships between adults. The Stoneleigh Group partners thought that this would be a good way to engage young people with the Stoneleigh Project.

Leadership as an outcome for the programme was a central vision. However, it was initially rejected as a curriculum for the retreats. Although outdoor approaches to informal education for young people have traditionally claimed a student centred approach, and this may be a fair description in relation to formal education or vocational training, Colin, the director of the main funding body, and Phil, the director of one of the youth agencies, were critical of accepted outdoor leadership training as an approach. Perhaps implicit in this criticism is the view that earlier forms of outdoor youth work, such as those discussed in Chapter 5, held value-laden, social engineering agendas. Colin was seeking a more liberal approach. He thought that such a style might provide a way to encourage young people to develop, believe in, and apply their own values rather than adopt those of a society whose values he saw as in need of transformation.

The idea of a retreat as a means to support a spiritual approach to youth development started with an influential experience that inspired Colin. This is discussed further in Chapter 9. He thought it would be an effective way to explore the values of young people. Colin, the major conceptual thinker in the early days of the Stoneleigh Group, thought young people were ‘a source of critical reflection on society and ... a major opportunity for the development of new values’ [N-C01(0299)]. He claimed his motivation for working with the Project was his own belief that ‘the idealism of young people in touch with their core values is a force for good in the world’ [N-C01(0299)]. He believed that, if these ideals were supported, they would flourish and the young people holding them would become agents of change in a world desperately in need of a restoration or even

transformation of values. In his view this constituted the need for a form of spiritual development. He thought this was because they were alienated from conventional religion that, in his view, was too authoritarian to appeal to the young people of today.

Colin believed that there is a breakdown in the process by which young people develop and act on their values systems. This he associated with a breakdown in some of the institutions of society, particularly education and religion. Whilst bemoaning the former for the way it excluded and let down young people in their development as citizens he seemed more comfortable with the reduction in the role of religion. He felt that the role of the Church in supporting values development directly or indirectly was diminishing and that it should diminish. He thought of it as still imparting traditional values rather than supporting the transformation he sought. He suggested that, 'in today's plural world, it is more a matter of young people developing their own values directly from experience rather than from a process of cultural transfer' [N-C01(0299)]. Colin was focussed on helping the development of, and supporting the application of, the values held by young people, rather than them acquiring them unquestioningly through institutions such as the Church. He thought that established institutions were not well adapted to respond to the moral changes taking place in society. He saw the values that he believed were held by many young people as an important way to address his and their concerns about the society they lived in and their opportunities within it.

Colin found an ally in Phil, a director of one of the voluntary youth organisations with which the Rank Foundation already had links. They both believed that having the chance to develop core values helped build identity and purpose. This, they both claimed, was spiritual development. They believed that 'purpose' would or should contain an element of transformation. In their early thinking the notion of transformation embraced several ideas. To begin with the Stoneleigh Group understood it as the process of addressing, through one's own efforts, personal issues such as an unhealthy self-concept, lack of confidence, weak family and social networks, or poor educational outcomes. Colin also understood transformation to be about finding new purposeful and fulfilling pathways forward. Lastly he thought it should also concern the young people in the work of transforming social issues in the wider community.

Colin and Phil decided to use the term 'leadership' to describe agency that resulted in social change and they thought the site of this process of transformation would be work, both voluntary and paid. In some cases, then, they thought it was the individual who was transformed for and through work. In other situations they thought that, as well as the individual, it was the nature and meaning of the work and through this the wider values of society that were also transformed.

The early partners recruited by Phil to the Stoneleigh Group were all interested in the development of values in young people. Phil, in an early briefing paper for organisations interested in joining the Stoneleigh Group wrote:

The objectives are to encourage an adventurous approach to the development of mind, body and spirit of young aspirant leaders, in particular by the introduction of dialogue concerning living values to everyday life. To encourage qualities such as love, peace, wisdom, strength and joy as the core for our inner selves.

The outer expressions of these qualities as spiritual values are;

Care

compassion

tolerance

respect

honesty

humility

co-operation

a sense of reverence

and a sense of destiny.

This process will empower young people with a willingness to become role models to their peers for the new millennium.

[CD-SG(0400)]

The Retreats

Part of this thesis is focussed on aspects of the retreat programme and its effect on the young people involved. The first four retreats were held at Camas on Mull between 2000 and 2002 (see Table 1 above). A further two retreats were held in 2003 and 2004, one at Cae Mabon in North Wales and one at Gillerthwaite in Cumbria. The community of people living at Camas for the summer hosted the Mull retreats. Communities put together from the members of the Stoneleigh Group partners hosted the other retreats.

The retreats provided the opportunity for participants to join these small communities, living simply in a remote location for six to ten days. The benefits of simplicity and remoteness were highlighted. Those who went on retreat were the young people and the adult elders or mentors from the voluntary organisations together with a specialist facilitator who was engaged to direct the week.

In its briefing paper to potential members the Stoneleigh Group defined the aims of the retreats as twofold:

To allow participants to discover more about themselves, their values, their ambitions and their future courses of actions and

To prepare young people as peer educators, role models and community leaders.

[M-SG(0900)]

The literature sent to the participants described the aims differently by stating that the retreats provide an opportunity to ask the questions ‘Who am I? What do I believe in? Where am I going?’ [R-SG(1100)].

The Evaluation Study

The Stoneleigh Group set out to evaluate the Stoneleigh Project as part of the central task of the pilot. The results of the study were intended to inform the unfolding practice and

then to support the advocacy work. The brief to the evaluator asked for three outcomes. The first, which was the focus of the first phase of funding, was to provide a rich description of the pedagogic practices and content of the programme. The second asked the evaluator to explore this in greater depth and to carry out a study of the effect of the programme on the young people. During the second phase of the Project the evaluator was also asked for a report on the impact of the programme in relation to the main aim of the Stoneleigh Group, that is 'to create agents of social change'.

The first round of evaluation was focussed on the content and processes of the Stoneleigh Project, and in particular the retreats, so that they could be developed and replicated in locations other than Camas. The key elements of the retreats were described by the first evaluation reports from Camas as:

Remoteness: So far we have been visiting a remote location on the west coast of Mull called Camas. Previous groups have told us this is an important aspect of the residential. Camas is not only on an island reached by a ferry, it involves a two mile walk from the road head to reach a row of cottages hidden in a bay by surrounding hills and with a view out to sea. No other buildings are in sight and casual visitors rare. The coastline and low hills provide endless opportunities for group or solo wanderings. It is important that the host centre's systems and skills allow for this. It is our intention to find other locations that provide this same feeling of isolation.

Simplicity: Another feature of Camas that is valued by the visitors is the simple living. Growing and preparing food, composting toilets, water from a spring, wood fires, candlelight, live music, story telling, simple activities and daily meetings of everyone to plan the day all offer simple lessons in a quality of life that depends on interdependence. At the same time it offers the space for busy lives to find peace and solitude, moments that are amongst the most highly valued by the visitors.

Community: An unusual feature of these residentials has been the presence of a volunteer community of eight to ten people living the simple life for an extended period. The nearest equivalent we can think of is a retreat to a monastery or nunnery.

This group have been young adults from all over the world together for up to six months. They help the group by:

- helping them settle in and develop a routine;
- role modelling how to make the most of collective, simple living and time for reflection;
- providing examples of people who are a little further down the path;
- living out the values of volunteering;
- providing a wealth of local knowledge;
- offering any number of opportunities for conversation, play and entertainment.

This community is led by professional staff who administer the facility, supervise the resident community and provide technical skills for exploring the hills and seas. Other residents and visitors can provide these skills too. Re-creating the community in other settings is one of the challenges of the group during this year.

The content: The residential is often described as having no programme. This is not quite how it is. A daily routine emerges from the tasks of living together in this remote spot. The meetings provide a structure for organising each day and the three aims of the programme provide a focus for making choices. What is reported as important is that:

- the plan for each day is negotiated;
- involvement in any formal activities other than the chores is optional.

Groups seem to enjoy exploring the setting and engaging in the new activities it can offer before using more time later in the week for conversations, creative activities and reflection. Sometimes sharing personal histories and insights or creating individual or group ceremonies have been significant aspects of the end of the week.....

The follow up weekend: About three months after the residential a follow up weekend has been organised for volunteers, mentors and the facilitator. The venue has been a simple residential setting often with a retreat connection. These have been

well attended considering the distances and logistics involved. They have been an opportunity to relive the residential and make some sense of it now in everyday life. The weekend seems to provide a chance for insight and commitment from which strength and action have followed. Participants prefer to keep these events to their own group.

This is the point at which the programme finishes any formal relationship with the volunteers and elders. However, many stay in touch with their elders, the facilitator or the programme, returning as elders in future years. We also hope that the volunteers and elders will continue their relationships formally by continuing the mentoring link or feeding this into the organisation's supervision or appraisal schemes.

[R-S02(0700)]

This list gives a strong sense of what was valued but only an inkling of why it was of value and for what it was of value; a list of ingredients without the recipe. The more generalised 'recipe' for the Stoneleigh Project as a whole (quoted above) does give some indicators but these are only partially related to the retreats. Nevertheless, the topics all describe qualities of power in relationships. Some, such as 'selection and mentoring' involve the exercise of power by significant adults in the member organisations. Others, such as 'mutuality', seek to describe the politics of relations on the retreats. Yet more, such as 'politically engaged', describe the aspiration for the young people to express themselves politically after the retreat phase. The participants in the study wanted to move from the notion of ingredients without a recipe to one of understanding the processes involved by examining the participants' experience of the way power worked during the retreats.

The second phase of evaluation set out to explore in more detail what the curriculum and pedagogy of the retreats was thought to be and in what way they were understood to have influenced the transitions of the young people into adulthood. As part of this phase the participants' interpretations of spiritual experience were reviewed and in the report grouped into four curriculum areas:

Mastery: This word was preferred by the project participants to the idea of leadership. To them it meant any creative expression. It might be an embodied skill or art or it could be language based. It might be directed at the self or be offered on behalf of others. It might involve practical, social, recreational or leadership skills.

Spirituality: This included any topics discussing life force or the idea of an ‘Other’ beyond humanity. I included material about people’s relationships with the ‘Other’ and the influence they believed it had on them.

Moral development: Under this topic I included anything that explored the personal ethics of the individual, how these were expressed, how people handled the ethics of others and what people thought of the morals of their communities or the wider society.

Philosophical inquiry: This heading covers any topics related to the nature of reality, how to think, thinking critically, self-awareness and reflexivity. Of the first three this theme had the greatest overlap with spirituality as I defined it.

[R-S02(2301)]

Within each of these areas of the retreat curriculum the evaluation indicated that participants thought that the centrally important process was that the tacit knowledge of the young people was valued. This, it was suggested, was achieved because the adult participants worked explicitly to support the young people in giving voice to this knowledge. The participants claimed that ways of knowing and ways of thinking about what is known were becoming more central than what to know as curriculum aims in the minds of the staff.

From this phase of the evaluation a number of beliefs concerning power emerged. These were reported as:

The potential of the learner to be autonomous.

The capacity of the project to support this autonomy.

The power of outdoor interventions to transform perceived personal and social limitations and constraints.

The capacity of the residential experience to create lasting relationships.

The capacity of these relationships between peers and between adults and young people to support the agency of the individual.

The capacity of the community or group and these relationships to support moral development.

The power of the individual as a potential agent of personal and social change.

[R-S02(2301)]

The beliefs suggest that the participants felt that emphasising autonomy placed a high value on the individuals' tacit knowledge and that this gave rise to a sense of power.

The role of the retreat community in making explicit personal or tacit knowledge, and in giving it meaning and value, is particularly emphasised by the evaluation as a critical element in developing the values of a person. The participants thought that the processes of expressing experiences to the community, and the community's engagement with these ideas, gave a previously silenced voice room to be heard and acknowledged. The belief was that this represented a shift in conventional power relations. Beliefs and values that, it was claimed, were previously socially and culturally derived were influenced more substantially by experience.

The second phase of evaluation also explored the claims made by participants that the retreats had helped them in their transitions to adulthood in various ways. In many cases the participants attributed the steps that they took next to the experiences they had had on the retreats. This included claims of empowerment leading them to confront personal and social issues in their families and communities as well as seeking out new adult working roles. However, this phase of the evaluation was limited to considering the changes in the trajectory of the young people as they moved away from situations of marginalisation. It

did not consider the degree to which this could be understood as ‘transformative’ or whether the young people were also acting as ‘agents of social change’.

Conclusion

The evaluation study provided substantial evidence of the curriculum and pedagogic practices of the retreats and their perceived benefits for the young people involved. The power relations between the participants emerged as an important theme in what was understood by them to be significant in relation to the effectiveness of the programme. Likewise the values lived by the host community at Camas were also identified as important. It was claimed that these had an impact on the young people and that this had an effect on their lives after the programme. ‘It changed my life’ was the claim made by one young person on the second retreat. However, it remained unclear what it was that had changed his life, in what way his life had changed, and whether these changes were congruent with the aims of the Stoneleigh Group to develop a programme that supported the creation of agents of social change.

This research sets out to address these questions. I wanted to explore what knowledge and values were developed by the retreats and how the lives of the young people were affected afterwards. In particular I was interested in how power was valued and how this interacted with the way in which different participants interpreted experiences, potentially giving voice to some views and silencing others. As the research developed the voices emerging within the programmes were also re-interpreted by members of the Stoneleigh Group in support of its advocacy work. This created a second pedagogic site in which the partners in the Stoneleigh Group interacted with each other as well as the individuals and organisations in the higher umbrellas of the wider world of youth work. Power was also a central theme of this development.

Therefore, for this research, I set out to look critically at how the Stoneleigh Project can be understood in relation to the way in which power operates within education. In particular I was interested in whether the programme supported young people in the reproduction or transformation of the social order and how. In order to do this I planned to draw on the

evidence from the evaluative studies at Camas and with the Stoneleigh Group along with additional evidence from the Stoneleigh Project and, especially, from the advocacy work of the Stoneleigh Group. My purpose was to consider in what way, if at all, an educational project of this kind can contribute to social change and the young people involved can be supported in acting as agents of that change. This led me to explore both the potential within the Stoneleigh Project for this kind of educational work and the attempts by the Stoneleigh Group to establish this kind of practice within the wider field of youth work.

In order to consider the politics of power and knowledge within informal education the research took a critical ethnographic perspective on the evidence. This was placed within a sociological framework of youth in society and especially youth work and its role in helping young people find an identity in the adult world that may be transforming of the young person or even the communities to which they belong. Chapter 3 explores youth development in the outdoors in more detail so that the beliefs and practices of the partners and the Stoneleigh Project they developed can be understood within the context of the historical and cultural influences upon the field. Chapter 4 discusses ideas concerning youth in society in order to provide a context for the ambitions of the Stoneleigh Group. Youth work has a long history of which many of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group have been a part. This context is considered in Chapter 5.

Chapter 3:

A Review of Outdoor Education Research

Introduction

One of the aims of this study is to contribute to the growing body of knowledge concerning the practice of outdoor education. This field has, until recently, been little studied academically in any context. This chapter reviews three meta-studies of outdoor education research work. Relevant research left out or published since the last of these studies is also reviewed.

The term ‘outdoor learning’ is widely used in this thesis. This phrase has been adopted recently by the UK professional body for the field, ‘The Institute for Outdoor Learning’; the UK academic journal ‘Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning’ and is increasingly used by providers (Greenaway, 2006). The change of term is intended to broaden the scope of these services to embrace informal and non-formal learning as well as formal education. The emphasis on learning is appealing to outdoor youth work with its person centred practice, hence its use in this thesis. In this chapter the term ‘outdoor education’ is more commonly used as this is the phrase found in research, especially that which pre-dates these changes. When relevant, the context for the outdoor education/learning is clearly identified.

Youth transition has been a focus of research interest for many years. The part played by informal education in this process has also been widely studied. Most recently a major study conducted by the Economic and Social Research Council’s Youth Research Programme under the title ‘Youth, Citizenship and Social Change’ (ESRC Youth Research Programme, 2002) has relevance to this thesis. An analysis of this literature will be found in Chapter 4. However, few of these studies have considered the approaches taken by outdoor education within the context of informal education.

Outdoor Education: Early Claims

Outdoor education is an emerging profession seeking to explain and justify itself within a variety of wider political, educational, legal and funding frameworks (Barnes and Sharp, 2004). In order to support this lobbying the field has conducted three meta-studies of a growing body of literature over the last 15 years. Whilst the earliest study was able to base itself in very little rigorous research the latter studies have been able to draw on an increasing number of academic texts. Work since the last of these studies has also added to the growing body of understanding in this area. This chapter begins by focusing on the findings of these meta-studies and comments on their thoughts regarding methods of research. Their ideas on the gaps in knowledge that might usefully be addressed and the directions that research in this field might take will also be discussed. The relevant literature published more recently is also reviewed. Finally, this section will indicate in what ways this thesis will address these possibilities and concerns.

Meaning and value are accorded a high status in the field of outdoor education. For example, the earliest meta-study, The Hunt Report, 'In Search of Adventure', (Hunt, 1989) that claimed to be the only major survey of outdoor adventure provision in the UK, prefaced its conclusions by

... drawing attention to the remarkable strength of conviction we have found ... as to the value to young people of Outdoor Adventure experiences. We have been impressed by the widespread and strongly-held belief in the importance of such opportunities; the belief that they may be the key to releasing the constructive energies and initiative of the young, ...

This conviction, expressed so widely, is the most impressive outcome of the study.

(p. 235)

However, this conviction, whilst based on considerable evidence collected by practising professional outdoor leaders, is anecdotal and unsupported in the report by reference to any rigorous research.

Emerging Research Findings Criticised

Six years later, in the second meta-study, Barrett and Greenaway (1995) found little UK research relating to outdoor adventure. The authors claimed that what there was tended to be ‘isolated, inconclusive, over-ambitious, uncritical, not of a high standard and difficult to locate’ (p. 53). They found little or no empirical research concerning the processes of outdoor adventure or group work in the outdoors. They did find some insights into the role and significance of the facilitator when personal and social development was the desired outcomes of the experiences. This research indicated that this role can enhance or detract from the experience and the desired learning but, yet again, it failed to identify the specific processes of facilitation that are consequential in causing these effects. One interesting finding for this study on which Barrett and Greenaway report is that ‘for many young people, experiences in the outdoors involve a ‘spiritual dimension’ (p. 31).

They were also critical of research from outside of the UK. This they found to have the following weaknesses:

little attention given to *young people’s own accounts* and perspectives

... of a one off nature ...

... outcomes are *assumed to be caused* by the adventure ingredient of outdoor adventure ...

much of the research *cannot be generalised* to other situations ...

there is an absence of research examining *the failure* of particular outdoor adventure experiences

there is a gap between practice and research ...

many studies are flawed by low questionnaire return rates ...

(p. 53, original emphasis)

The Meta-Studies Reviewed

In 2004 Rickinson, Dillon, Teamey, Morris, Choi, Sanders and Benefield, reviewing research worldwide published in the English language, noted a change finding a ‘... substantial amount and range of research that has been carried out in outdoor learning in

the 1990s and 2000s' (p. 55). They believe that this research 'highlights demonstrable benefits' and 'gives a clear endorsement for certain kinds of ... provision' (p. 52). Whilst being able to identify certain outcomes and criteria of quality they claim that there remains little research evidence that helps with the understanding of the processes involved in conducting effective outdoor learning events. In addition some of the elements that the Hunt Report claimed are highly valued by outdoor educators are, Rickinson *et al.* believe, challenged by the research findings. These include questions around the value of novel experiences and unfamiliar settings, whether any benefits are sustained over time and a concern that, whilst some claims made by outdoor programmes are achieved, many claims are apparently unsupported by the research so far.

The authors concluded with key messages including some for research. They identify 'blank spots' and 'blind spots' (Wagner, 1993) highlighting two issues, first 'how to improve the methodological rigour of outdoor learning research...' and second 'how to improve and deepen the research-based understandings of the outdoor learning *process*.' (p. 56).

The 'blind spots' identified by Rickinson *et al.* were:

The nature of the 'learning' in outdoor education.

The relationship between indoor learning and outdoor learning.

The historical and political aspects of outdoor education policy and curricula.

(p. 57)

The research on which Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson *et al.* (2004) report consists largely of attempts to identify affective, cognitive or behavioural outcomes in order to provide an empirical justification for the projects under review. These studies set out looking for something rather than wondering what they might find. The focus on predetermined outcomes desired by administrators and funding organisations could leave much of the learning that is perceived as of benefit by the participants unnoticed. Another reason why some outcomes are largely unsupported maybe because they are hard to

measure or simply do not feature explicitly in the aims of the user organisations. Rickinson *et al.*'s comments about the rhetoric to practice gap may indicate that they believe it is the former rather than the latter. The aims may be articulated but they are perhaps not demonstrated by the commonly employed approaches to data collection and interpretation. In addition they suspect that there may still be an influence from the tendency for evaluation and research to measure what can be measured. This they suggest can lead to an inclination to include these 'measurables' as aims, as it is known that they can be demonstrated. This may be at the expense of desirable, achievable but unnoticed benefits. It may even lead to the inclusion of undesirable aims on the grounds that they can be tested and have entered popular myth as a 'good thing' (for example see Richards, 2003).

In addition, survey and questionnaire methods have tended to generalise across a group or several groups. This approach, as Barrett and Greenaway indicate, tends to '...devalue the diversity of starting points, experiences and outcomes, as they are felt and valued by the participants'. It is possible that the research conducted so far has not found evidence to support many of the values placed on outdoor education by practitioners, participants and user groups because, as Rickinson *et al.* (2004) suggest, 'it has either looked in the wrong place or looked in the wrong way'. These same approaches would also leave the process of outdoor education largely unnoticed, left within the 'black box' of the outdoor programme.

Barrett and Greenaway (1995) commented that 'effective research requires *a new paradigm.*' (p. 53, original emphasis). They suggested that

the scientific research paradigm employed in most of the research reviewed has been shown to be ill suited to the task of studying the complex phenomena, which constitute the experience of outdoor adventure. It is the conclusion of this Review that the humanistic and qualitative approaches employed recently by researchers in other fields of UK research offer a more promising way forward.

(p. 53)

The research paradigm being proposed as a ‘way forward’ is closely associated with the ‘complex phenomena’ that they are recommending as the focus of future research. The authors highlight the subjectivity of outdoor adventure experiences commenting:

Many research designs do not seem to recognise that adventure is a subjective experience that differs widely from one individual to another. What is experienced, perceived and learned is dependent not only on an individual’s psychological makeup but also on the social and community context in which that person lives. Research design and methods must take account of the *actual experience* of learners if they are to contribute to the real understanding of the *processes* at work.

(p. 53, original emphasis)

Barrett and Greenaway comment on the lack of research into the full range of outdoor programmes taking place. They highlight a concentration on programmes aimed at ‘at risk’ and ‘in trouble’ groups; populations for which a justification is a necessity if funding streams and public and political support is to be maintained. Rickinson *et al.* (2004) set out to report on research conducted into outdoor education and schools. Their meta-analysis does draw on sources that do not relate to schools; for example Reddrop (1997) conducted a study of outdoor programmes for young offenders. However, these studies still refer, in part, to school-aged children. This may mean that they found little research conducted into the field of informal education outdoors with young people not at school or not of school age. Alternatively they may have excluded these studies from their analysis in order to focus on school related provision. However, like Barrett and Greenaway’s (1995) work, these authors found little research concerning informal education outdoors for young people.

Recent research reviewed

In 2001 Davidson (2001) was already responding to the same concerns expressed by Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson *et al.* (2004) by conducting qualitative research that examined the outdoor experiences of schoolboys. She states ‘a need has been recognised to develop research that explores the “process variables” of adventure

experiences ...' (p. 12, original emphasis). She understood the experiences as subjective and meaningful claiming that '(m)eaning is the "essential concern" of qualitative research' (p. 12. Original emphasis) and that 'qualitative data allow for the illumination of individual processes of meaning making ...' (p. 12). She claims that the results obtained from this perspective reveal benefits that exceed those identified by conventional research methods.

Davidson's conclusions are that the outdoor experiences are more about encouraging a process than about achieving particular outcomes. Specifically she claims that the freedom to choose and the enhancement of making choices that increase the chances of feeling good were highly valued by the boys. Drawing on Dewey's (1997a) educational philosophy Davidson suggests that outdoor experiences support a holistic and lifelong learning that enable participants to enjoy and engage with life. In her view young people need to develop 'the capacity to enjoy life ... something which is often antagonistic to a work ethic' (p. 18). Yet without it, she claims, young people will not develop the intrinsic motivation 'to make their lives freely inspired adventures' (p. 18) or, as the Stoneleigh Group (Loynes, 2004b) described it, 'agents of change overcoming their marginalised circumstances and realising their potential' (p. 2).

Davidson (2001) is suggesting a political role for outdoor education, one that is founded on the liberal educational notions of increased agency leading to the individual realising their own potential and becoming a good and fulfilled citizen. Davidson comments that all her study group 'had challenging ambitions in mind for the future' (p. 18). Her views are echoed by the beliefs of the Stoneleigh Group as summarised in Chapter 2. The Stoneleigh Group believed that the outdoor experience had the power to promote agency and that this transferred into their attitudes and the trajectories that the participants took towards their lives after the outdoor experiences.

Neill and Dias (2001), studying 18–24 year old young people on Outward Bound courses, also found that the outdoor experience enhanced a process, namely the resilience of the participants. This can arguably be thought of as similar or related to Davidson's (2001) findings that an outdoor experience increases the chances of making choices that promote

feeling good. Davidson does highlight overcoming challenge, building confidence and mental strength as significant benefits reported by her study group.

Neill and Dias (2001) identify some of the processes within the programme that were thought to provide the context in which enhanced resilience could occur. They highlight the role of social support from both peers and adults as of equal significance in encouraging development as were the challenging activities of the course. This, they claim, supports the construction of a greater resilience in a way unique to each individual. The diversity of participants, they point out, was an important factor in the dynamics that led to the kind of support that was perceived as constructive. However, they also draw attention to the potential for the differences within the group to create a negative social environment and they highlight the importance of the role of the facilitator in tackling negative social dynamics early if the potential benefits are to be achieved for the widest number. The nature of what constitutes a negative social environment is not defined by the authors other than that it stems from unsupportive actions by members of the group.

The ‘double-edged sword’ in the title of Neill and Dias’s (2001) paper is a reference to a quotation from Kurt Hahn, the founder of Outward Bound, which they summarise as meaning that the Outward Bound process both cuts a person and then heals that individual so that they are stronger than before (p. 36). The authors conclude with a statement of support for this concept. This is a challenging result for the Stoneleigh Project. Its retreat approach to outdoor education set out to offer an environment that was deliberately not challenging in the classical outdoor sense. It could be argued that the values of Camas or the novelty of new people and an unusual way of life were themselves challenging. Alternatively, it could be claimed that the young people involved in the Stoneleigh Project have already encountered sufficient challenges in life. What was missing, it could be said, was the social support during their transitions to adulthood that the retreat programme set out to initiate. With this interpretation Neill and Dias’s findings could help explain the results that the Stoneleigh Project evaluation reported (Loynes, 2004b). The findings that the social networks of the participants were enhanced, leading to more constructive trajectories towards adult identities, can arguably be understood as related to Neill and Dias’s (2001) increased resilience and Davidson’s (2001) better chances for feeling good.

The reported impact of the Stoneleigh Project retreats on the lives of the participants after the retreats could also help to answer Neill and Dias's uncertainty about the transferability of the resilience developed on the courses they studied.

Neill and Dias's other findings are also supported by some of the evaluative results from the Stoneleigh Project (Loynes, 2004b). The diversity represented by the mix of the host community, the young people, and the adults on retreat was identified as a significant element of the programme as was the importance of the facilitator's role in addressing conflict as part of the process of the retreat.

Sibthorp (2003), studying teenage adolescents on a three week adventure course, highlights the processes within the programme that support the transfer of learning. He, like Davidson, thinks that a qualitative approach to understanding outdoor experiences is more likely to provide evidence of the processes that are at work. Like Neill and Dias, Sibthorp also identifies the importance of social support as essential for the learning that outdoor courses encourage. In particular he claims that the intergenerational nature of the group, encountering new and different people, and feedback, discussion and analysis with peers are all significant elements. Again, the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project supports these findings. The report (Loynes, 2004b) places a strong emphasis on the intergenerational elements of the groups on retreat suggesting that the variety of the power relations this creates were of special significance. In addition the formal and informal social encounters such as 'the room of the nets', co-constructed rituals, the dining room table, collaborative cooking, camping, and the evenings round the fire were also highlighted.

Sibthorp (2003) adds a number of other factors that were also important. The explicit intention to construct the experience as meaningful to the lives of the participants prior to the course is identified as significant. In the same way the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project identified the purposes of 'who am I?, what do I believe in? and where am I going?' as important to creating the right approach to the potential for learning from the retreats.

Sibthorp (2003) also claims that conscious reflection is an important element. Several other authors mention the significance of a reflective space. Rea (2006) notes that the process of reflection can be unstructured; precipitated by the structural elements of the place, the group, and the activities rather than a facilitated event in the programme. Taniguchi, Freeman and LeGrand-Richards (2005) expand on the role of reflection in a model of transformative learning derived from what they term meaningful outdoor experiences. They understand it as a critical element in association with social learning opportunities. I will return to a discussion of their model below.

Lastly, Sibthorp (2003) states that the doing of skills in context, that is in an authentic way, is also significant to endorsing the value of the experience. Whilst he implies that he is referring here to the doing of outdoor activities the Stoneleigh Project evaluation (Loynes, 2004b) would suggest that this authentic doing applies to a wider range of activities such as bread making or the serving of meals.

These findings of Sibthorp, building on the conclusions of Davidson (2001) and Neill and Dias (2001), contradict the critique of ‘neo-Hahnian outdoor education’ by Brookes (2003). He claims that it is a fallacy that learning transfers from outdoor experiences to everyday life. In his view this belief is founded on the needs of the field to validate its worth in an educational environment that values instrumental outcomes. However, his analysis is based on research that, at that time, had focussed on attempts to discover instrumental outcomes from outdoor experiences. The later work of Sibthorp, Davidson, and Neill and Dias, focussing on the processes and meanings of experience, offers a different interpretation of the benefits of outdoor experiences to everyday life.

Tucker (2003), studying the work of one provider of personal development outdoors for young people, adds further to the understanding of the processes that support learning within a programme. The term used by the provider that she researched is that of a ‘safe learning environment’. Yet again the perceived importance of a ‘warm and friendly’ social context is highlighted. Her findings confirm much of Sibthorp’s (2003) and Neill and Dias’s (2001) conclusions about the processes that contribute to this social environment. In

addition she identifies trust, support and encouragement between peers and by facilitators as critical elements of success. Like Neill and Dias, Tucker (2003) also remarks that these attributes have to be worked at by the facilitators and the participants in the courses. Friendliness, calmness, peacefulness and a warm welcome are suggested as characteristics contributing to this environment. Tucker states that this atmosphere then supports what she identifies as a learner-centred approach that can respond to the needs and pace of each individual even when the programme, from the perspective of the activities, may seem very structured and repetitive.

Williamson and Taylor (2005) develop the understanding of the relationship between structured experiential learning and the process of integrating the meaning this experience has with everyday life or, as they refer to it, 'different settings of experience' (p. 133). These ideas emerged from an international project called Madzinga to develop non-formal educational approaches in Belgium and Lithuania in partnership with Outward Bound Belgium. Taking a narrative approach to the construction of meaning, they postulate four stages of development from awareness to responsibility to experimentation and generalisation. The stage of 'responsibility' is an unusual suggestion amongst theories of learning. They describe this as 'the 'acceptance of one's strengths and weaknesses' (p. 134). Williamson and Tucker imply that, for this process to unfold, several iterations of structured learning are necessary giving some value to Tucker's 'repetitive' programme. Like Tucker, Williamson and Taylor emphasise the importance of a facilitated learning claiming that 'processing ... helps young people to bring the (two forms of experience) closer together and optimally they become interwoven so that the awareness and growth that occurs during the experiential learning programme produces gains for use in other settings and situations' (p. 133).

Tucker's (2003) emphasis on a learner-centred approach facilitated by trust, support and encouragement implies power relations that give the young person more of the responsibility for constructing the meaning of their experiences. Trust, support and encouragement were recognised by the partners in the Stoneleigh Group as critical contributors to building successful relationships and achieving constructive outcomes

within their own youth work and they were identified as essential ingredients in the perceived success of the Stoneleigh Project.

Tucker, like Sibthorp (2003), also identifies explicit intention as an important element that supports learning and, especially, the transfer of learning to everyday life. She highlights the important role of staff from the home context participating in the course and being available back in the community in the support of the transfer of learning. Like the mentors in the Stoneleigh Project, they can be understood as beginning and sustaining a conversation with the young person before, during, and after the outdoor intervention. This, the Stoneleigh Project evaluation claimed, is a significant contributor to the construction of new meanings and a sense of empowerment (Loynes, 2004b).

Tucker concludes that the case study she examined understands learning as a process although she recognises contradictions in its practice. She suggests that the informal outdoor youth work she studied uses both experiential and social constructions of meaning and, most significantly in her view, values the meaning that is developed by the young person; ‘young people first’ (p. 282) as she reports the provider putting it. The experiential and social dimensions of the outdoors as a context for learning and a basis for practice are echoed by the claims of the Stoneleigh Project report (Loynes, 2004b). Tucker’s case study would also seem to hold similar philosophical views about a person-centred approach to experiential education. However, she does not identify what the benefits of these approaches might be. She does stress the importance, if this approach to outdoor informal education is to be coherent, of negotiating the purpose as well as the meaning of the courses with young people and not establishing pre-determined outcomes driven by the institution providing the funding or sending the young people. This is an approach the Stoneleigh Group would claim to have followed. This thesis considers what degree of agency and transformation such approaches achieve and what forms of expression they take. To put it another way, one aim of the research is to examine what form the conversation with the young people took and what differences this made to the meaning and power the young people had in their lives.

Taniguchi, Freeman and LeGrand-Richards (2005) offer a model for the processes at work within an outdoor programme that lead to personal and social development. Their study, conducted with adults, focuses on the role of perceived risk prior to participation in an activity. They claim that it is critical to initiating a learning process. The next stage, they claim, is that of feeling awkward or uncomfortable, reminiscent of the concepts of stretch (Luckner and Nadler, 1992) or peak adventure (Mortlock, 1984; Priest and Gass, 1997), often used to explain the educational value of adventure experiences. They claim that facing the reality of an identity that cannot respond to the situation without developing new skills and knowledge reduces self-esteem and leads to what they call 'fractional sublimation'. This they define as the process of shedding façades that have been adopted by the individual on the basis of what they believe society expects them to be like. They call it 'fractional' because they state that it can only ever be a partial sublimation. The authors emphasise that this indicates that learning out of doors, especially at this stage, is not always comfortable or pleasant.

Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) claim that, at this stage, there is a special role for the environment as a location for projections and a source of metaphors that can help conceptualise and articulate this process and the new sense of self that emerges from it. This supports the claims made by Loynes (2002a) for the symbolic, semiotic, and metaphorical role of the environment in personal development. Authors, like Neill and Dias (2001), Sibthorp (2003) and Tucker (2003), highlight the role of social learning and especially feedback from peers at this stage.

The stage of fractional sublimation, Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) claim, then leads to a reconstruction of identity and, finally, growth based on an authentic sense of the self. Reflection, reflective spaces, and solitude are reported as essential to the success of this phase of the process. Like Sibthorp (2003) and the findings of the Stoneleigh Project evaluation (Loynes, 2004b), the importance of a reflective space following on from social learning opportunities is emphasised.

Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) enlarge on Dewey's (1997b) philosophy of experiential education by claiming that their findings indicate that experience alone is not sufficient to cause personal growth but that the experience of perceived risk provides a meaningful experience that is, they believe, causal in initiating development. They propose the concept of 'meaningful experiential learning' as a better term.

Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) do not define risk and, in their paper, apply it specifically to adventure activities. If perceived risk as a concept can be applied to new experiences of a wider nature, as authors such as Priest and Gass (1997) and Hopkins and Putnam (1993) claim, then this model offers an interesting way to interpret the experiences of the Stoneleigh Project retreat. It builds on the discussion above concerning Neill and Dias's (2001) reference to Hahn's 'double-edged sword' of challenge and social support. Indeed, as I suggest above, it could be applied to the process of youth transition. Learning, then, would be understood as initiated by the perception of the risks of finding a trajectory towards adulthood or of living within the youth world. This model has much in common with the model proposed by Loynes (2003) based on the Kubler-Ross change curve (1997) and Campbell's model of the Hero's Journey (Campbell, 1968). Used as a diagnostic tool it would be possible to suggest that participants have already embarked on a learning process and that the outdoor intervention should be congruent with the stage they have reached at the time of the programme; a retreat paralleling a time of reconstruction for example.

Overall, these authors suggest that an outdoor experience provides an authentic experience that helps override earlier constructions of the self and build a new and more realistic version with enhanced agency to engage with the world.

Other authors provide a different analysis of the outdoor experience that indicates that authenticity is not all that is encountered out of doors. They also suggest that qualitative approaches that explore 'the "process variables" of adventure experience instead of measuring outcomes' (Davidson, 2001) can be enhanced by a more critical perspective.

McCulloch (2004), studying the ideological and historical roots of two sail training schools from a critical sociological perspective, identifies the ways in which values from the sailing traditions on which these two approaches are founded persist. He claims that the choices made by educators to provide sailing experiences of a particular kind are not ‘value neutral’ but that the choice is made with an awareness, albeit tacit, of the values that are represented by the vessel and its traditions. In this way for example, he suggests, hierarchical, patriarchal and masculine values associated historically with naval and mercantile sailing vessels can and are maintained by the ‘tall ships’ of sailing schools. This will be different, he proposes, from the values maintained by the ‘fore and aft’ vessels with their historical roots in an upper class leisure tradition.

McCulloch further proposes that many, if not all, outdoor activities have their own histories and traditions that represent specific sets of values and that, when they are disembedded from their original context for pedagogical reasons, they should be chosen with an awareness of this background. This concurs with Loynes (2004a) who discusses the military values of control in space and time and hostile terrain associated with navigating with map and compass. As an example of the tenacity of values and purposes in the field of outdoor education Nicol (2002), describing the growth in outdoor education provision between 1945 and the 1960s, states

This growth is characterised by diversity where common themes such as “fitness for war”, “character building”, “social education”, “recuperative holiday for socially disadvantaged young people” and “progressive education” emerge as competing and contrasting claims.

(p. 29. Original emphasis)

I will return to Nicol’s claims and their relevance to the historical development of the practices of informal education out of doors in Chapter 5.

Such warnings resonate with the notion of retreat and its religious overtones. This was a strong feature of concern for the participants and the organisations involved in the Stoneleigh Project. This is discussed further in Chapter 13.

Humberstone (2001) proposes that many outdoor adventure activities, and the concepts and processes that support them, were constructed within a masculine hegemony. As a result they are readily able to reproduce the hegemonic power relations embedded within them. Her view is supported by Cook (2001) who claims that, when girls began to participate in outdoor education, the experiences ‘reflected wider social assumptions about gender rather than challenged them’ (p. 50). This is of particular concern to the Stoneleigh Group in the light of its aspirations to confront the established order by creating young people who act as agents of social change. It is this critical sociological approach that defines this research as distinct from my qualitative inquiries that inform the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project (Loynes, 2004b).

Zink and Burrows (2006) discuss how the critical sociological perspective of Michel Foucault can help with an understanding of outdoor education as a social phenomenon. They claim that

in effect this approach turns many of the questions that have been asked in outdoor education research on their heads. The starting point shifts from understanding what happens in outdoor education to considering how outdoor education is formed and the processes at work that constitute and support the particular practices that are occurring.

(p. 42)

To illustrate this point Zink and Burrows describe how the concept of challenge is legitimised by a series of historical references that are traced back to Plato. Rather than asking whether this confirms challenge as a natural part of human development they would ask who benefits from challenge being maintained as a core concept in outdoor education. Power is a central tool in Foucault’s analysis of modern society. Zink and Burrows use this

tool to ask of outdoor education what ‘particular ways of doing and knowing ... are privileged and (what) other ways of doing and knowing ... are foreclosed’ (p. 43)? This, they claim, leads to a consideration of ‘what is possible in outdoor education, given the relations of power at work’ (p. 43). Foucault’s approach to power and knowledge suggests, Zink and Burrows claim, that outdoor education research should consider the particulars of each programme’s and each individual’s discursive relationships rather than seek for unifying principles of cause and effect that can be applied universally as good practice.

Foucault’s concept of discourse is also relevant, Zink and Burrows suggest, to the construction of the self. They state that ‘the same relations of power that produce selves are used by the self in fashioning themselves as an individual’ (p. 44). In other words, as they illustrate with challenge as their example, the established discourse about challenge may constitute an individual in relation to it but, at the same time, the idea of challenge may be transformed by the individual’s discourse about the experience. The individual may not necessarily reproduce the dominant discourse of outdoor education. Foucault supports the possibility of agency on the part of the individual.

A key point of the Foucauldian approach for Zink and Burrows is that it allows for the messiness of human existence. By bringing to the foreground the experience of the individual, research can avoid interpreting events in relation to rational, unified and linear models of experience and development.

Zink and Burrows’ (2006) account of how a discourse may be transformed seems related to Taniguchi *et al*’s (2005) concept of fractional sublimation. Taniguchi *et al*’s model suggests that the outdoor experience is particularly well suited, under certain conditions, to supporting people to challenge dominant discourses, a view shared by the findings from the Stoneleigh Project (Loynes, 2004b). The approaches inspired by Foucault that Zink and Burrows propose will help as a context that can provide a critical perspective on the discourses constructed about each individual and about the Stoneleigh Project programme. A critical perspective will help in the analysis of the way these may have empowered the young people or constrained them. Likewise Zink and Burrows’ work suggests ways of

approaching the discourses about the programme, and about the lives of the young people, that were held between the partners in the Stoneleigh Group and between the Stoneleigh Group and the wider world of youth work institutions. In particular this critical perspective will help place the findings of the Stoneleigh Project evaluation report (Loynes, 2004b) in a critical light that can inform the questions asked by this thesis.

Locating this Study within the Wider Research on Outdoor Education

Trends in research on outdoor education have diversified from the early studies summarised by Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson *et al.* (2004) that sought to confirm or reject the claims for the benefits of outdoor experiences recorded by Hunt (1989). Much of this later research has set out to address questions about the process of outdoor education and about young people's experiences of outdoor education. This work has found a complex and rich subject that can usefully be understood as a process in which each individual constructs, through discourse, the meaning the experience has for them. It is not always appropriate, these later authors claim, to generalise from person to person or programme to programme.

Other studies have alerted the field of outdoor education to the historical and cultural influences that lead outdoor practice to be a certain way and invite practitioners and researchers to ask questions about who is privileged by these constructions of power and knowledge in this field. Such questions can help both individual participants and the designers of outdoor programmes gain some agency in the educational process and so to become agents of change rather than simply uncritical reproducers of established narratives and practices. This thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding of an approach to practice that was claimed as critical on the lives of the young people participating in the programme and on the pedagogic practices of informal education out of doors. This will help address some of the 'gaps and blind spots' identified by Rickinson *et al.* (2004) and discussed above.

In addition, following the suggestions of Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson *et al.* (2004) this study will contribute to the knowledge of this field and also seek to enhance the rigour of qualitative studies by:

- accepting the subjective nature of outdoor experiences and adopting questions, interpretative methodologies, and research methods that allow for this;
- including the wider context in which the outdoor education experience is located, in this case the lives of young people and the practice of youth work;
- developing an understanding of the processes of learning and the nature of the curricula within this case study of outdoor education;
- taking a critical approach especially with regard to the historical and political influences upon the field;
- adopting a research design that gives a voice to the participants of the retreats and respects the diversity of experiences;
- critically reviewing the rigour of its method and the value of its findings in a wider context.

As Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson *et al.* (2004) advocated, I worked with the intention of ensuring that the research benefited the subjects of the research. It is also part of the research plan that the findings are disseminated within the outdoor and youth work professional fields as well as used to support theoretical understanding.

Chapter 4:

Youth, Transition and Agency

Introduction

This chapter examines the literature that discusses the nature of youth in modern society, the ideas concerning the transition to adulthood, and the role of agency in this process. This will support the analysis of the Stoneleigh Project placed within the social and historical contexts of young people.

At the centre of the Stoneleigh Project and of this research are young people. These young people are understood by the organisations that they are involved in as in need of support in the process of development beyond statutory provision. The Stoneleigh Group aimed to give these young people a voice with which to express their understandings of their lives. In giving them a voice the organisers believed they were helping them enhance their social capital and social networks, supporting them in the trajectory of their transitions from youth to adult, and perhaps encouraging them to become agents of change in their communities.

This raises a number of themes concerning young people that are relevant to the analysis of the Stoneleigh Project. This chapter will consider the ideas of youth, development and transition, a set of constructs that were at the heart of the world-view of the Stoneleigh Group. In addition, agency is a central educational value held by the Stoneleigh Group. I will review the ways in which social theories understand the task of constructing the self and the degree to which traditional enabling and constraining structures that supported this process have broken down.

These themes will be further analysed in Chapter 8 using Bernstein's theories of education. This will provide a context in which to discuss the way in which the Stoneleigh Project

engaged with these issues and how the narratives of the participants involved in the Project informed these problematic theoretical perspectives.

An earlier version of this analysis was used to inform some of the inquiries conducted by the research group participants during the participative inquiry.

Youth in Context

The Stoneleigh Project worked with young people largely between the ages of 18 and 25. Whilst some of the Stoneleigh Group partners work with children as young as 12, all of them concentrate on young people post-16, a time described by the partners as ‘youth’. They all consider themselves youth organisations involved in youth development. Rogers (1997b) claims that the modern idea of youth has developed and changed along with modern times which he dates back to the end of the eighteenth century and the emergence of humanistic forms of governance and of industrialisation. Among the many influences on young people that he identifies are improvements in living standards, social reforms such as education and health care, a liberalisation of the culture and its values, work and employment patterns, an emerging leisure society, consumerism and shifts from a collective to an individual locus of responsibility. These influences were, he believes, heavily mediated at different times for different groups, by gender, race, and class so that at all times during this two hundred year history the picture was one of diversity. Rogers claims that, as the gap between child/student and adult/parent/worker increased, and increased for more young people in society, a youth culture emerged within it. At the same time the idea of a transition through this period of youth and into adulthood grew.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) describe how the changes in society over the last 20 years have affected young people. They claim that ‘...relationships with family and friends, experiences in education and the labour market, leisure and lifestyles and the ability to become independent young adults’ (p. 1) have all altered significantly. They identify the two main causes of these effects as a restructuring of the labour market and of new social policies. Bynner, Ferri and Shepherd (1997) conducted a large-scale study of the lives of young people in 1990’s Britain who were born in 1970. They confirm Furlong and

Cartmel's summary describing what they refer to as an increasingly polarised experience of youth. Drawing on Hutton (1995) they characterise it as a 30/30/40 situation, that is 30% of young people 'getting on', 30% of young people 'getting by' and 40% of young people 'getting nowhere'. Bynner *et al.* (1997) identify the significant changes in the labour market during the 1980's and continuing into the 90's. They claim that these resulted in less work and work of a different kind involving new knowledge and skills that many were unable to develop. They describe young people as unable to define themselves as producers. Instead they claim they have become defined by consumption. Education they suggest had become a complicated mixture of further and higher education and training schemes, the latter they suggest being stigmatised as ways to keep young people off the streets as much as to train them for work.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) believe that, whilst structural factors such as class, gender and race still play influential parts, they are less likely to determine the outcome in a process much more open to influence by self construction even amongst those most disadvantaged.

This, Rogers (1997b), believes, has occurred despite various and conflicting government policies. Thatcherism, for example, did not yield:

... a robust individualism' nor even 'strengthened families', so much as the striving after other sites of security and sustenance.

There is ...evidence of a growing tribalism or collectivism about some of today's young people. Their worlds, multiple as ever, are increasingly constructed around 'getting a life' in which others are an essential ingredient.

(p. 16: original emphasis)

Bynner *et al.* (1997) agree with Furlong and Cartmel (1997) about structural factors being only part of the situation experienced by young people today. They identify the other influences as personal circumstances made more complicated by a diversifying culture, varied regional developments and social policy. 'Getting on' or 'getting by', they claim,

depended much more on family and to some degree community resources rather than state support but that access to these was increasingly fragile for many. At the same time they suggest that social policy placed an increasing responsibility on a young person to work out a pathway to adulthood and less on the state, the family or the community. Indeed, they point out that the Welfare State had to a large extent been transformed by the withdrawal of unemployment and other benefits leaving those without work or education very little with which to support their development and so further excluding them from finding work or joining in with the consumer society. Funding for young people was increasingly targeted and aimed at 'problems'. They comment that one consequence of these trends was an increased internalisation of a sense of failure leading to high levels of anxiety, depression and despair amongst some in the marginalised groups. They conclude

If the 1970 cohort was moving into a 'post modern world', where all the old boundaries and certainties were breaking down then this was something really being exploited only by those who had the human and social capital to succeed under the new conditions – and would probably have done well under any circumstances. Marginalisation of others, locked into poor quality work, unemployment, poverty and disadvantage pointed more to the need for survival in the modern world, rather than the transformation of society that the new and radical values were supposed to bring. These young people really were *getting nowhere* and nowhere is becoming a much harder place to be.

(p. 128: original emphasis)

Mizen (2004) also points out that, as a result of government policies through the 90's, the task of navigating a pathway to adulthood has become far more costly and precarious. He argues that ageist policies have reversed the earlier policy model of the inclusion of young people in social and political life to one of exclusion, separation from other social groups such as families and older generations and division between sub-groups of the young. In doing so he supports Bynner *et al's* (1997) notions of the policy driven structural causes of 'polarisation, social exclusion and individualisation' (p. 5). As well as highlighting the cost of growing up, Mizen (2004) comments on the cost of failure in the employment market claiming that the

Levels of youth unemployment ... reveal the failure of the turn to education and training as the monetarists' prime 'solution' to the change in the demand for youth labour. Longer periods of education, the relentless pursuit of qualifications, the intensification of schooling and examination, and the generalisation of training to ever-greater numbers of young people, on their own have failed to create the jobs and prosperity that a generation of young people have been promised.

(p. 183-184).

According to Bynner *et al.* (1997) these comments would apply more accurately to the 30% 'getting by' and particularly the 40% 'going nowhere' rather than the 30% 'getting on' for whom this provision has fulfilled its promise. Mizen concludes by suggesting that the solution to the 'problems' of the young would be to invest in the families and communities that provide the social networks and create the employment opportunities and so reverse the trends towards individualisation and polarisation.

Henderson, Holland, McGrellis, Sharpe and Thomson (2007) studied a group of 100 young people in transition to adulthood between 1996 and 2006. Confirming that many of the trends of the 90's continued they identify social mobility as an increasingly important concept in a successful youth transition. Evans (2002) found that young people perceived qualifications as the single most important social capital in finding a pathway to adulthood. Henderson *et al.* (2007) highlight the importance of the personal context of a young person suggesting that gaining competence and then that competence being recognised by others were central elements in gaining work in its broadest sense. This, they claim, highlights the importance of social networks and the role of social mobility, both in terms of changes for a young person in their social networks and, sometimes, in their geographical setting, on finding identity and transition to adulthood. They suggest that young people are unlikely to act like 'cosmopolitans' without economic support from the family or the state. Additionally they highlight the importance of emotional resilience in coping with the increased responsibility and complexity of becoming adult. However, like Bynner *et al.* (1997) they point out that reproduction of an adult role is not simply a matter of education and resources. In their view class, gender, regional and policy factors were still significant influences on the trajectory of a young person.

Evans and Heinz (1995) and Henderson *et al.* (2007) also raise an important but neglected concept of ‘downward mobility’ pointing out that, whilst there are young people with resources and good networks upwardly socially mobile on merit there are also young people downwardly mobile on lack of merit or simply lack of opportunity brought about by a lack of resources and networks. Goffman (1962) claims that education is an effective mechanism for ‘cooling out’ those for whom upward mobility is not possible or for whom downward mobility is their reality. He suggests that, whilst education raises aspirations for all, it also provides socially agreed and supposedly objective hurdles to ensure that individual aspirations are reduced in keeping with the actual opportunities for upward mobility that are available.

This mobility, upwards and downwards, Henderson *et al.* suggest enhances the trends towards ‘individualisation’ and ‘detraditionalisation’. They concur with Beck (1992) that the task of ‘dealing with insecurity and reflexivity’ (p. 98) brought about by these conditions has produced a new inequality as young people learn to be variously proficient at managing their biographies.

The Vulnerability of Youth

The Stoneleigh Group partners understand youth transition to be a time of risk as well as opportunity. This is reflected in their statements of purpose (see Appendix 4). For example Eden Community Outdoors state that the ‘(c)ommunity does not know how to support young people...’ (Appendix 4). The period of youth is also understood by them to be partially lacking in forms of institutional support and increasingly negotiated by young people for and between themselves. Weston Spirit claim there is a ‘lack of opportunity and poverty of aspiration’ (Appendix 4) and the Prince’s Trust believe ‘the difficulties many young people face are complex and interconnected’ (Appendix 4). For all of the partners, youth work is a means to support those that are marginalised or vulnerable during this time, for example Endeavour Training state they work for ‘young people especially hard to reach groups, those “at risk” of exclusion, and those already on the edges of society’ (Appendix 4: original emphasis). Although several potentially enriching aspects of culture are identified as a result of this new stage in life these are not explicitly seen by the Stoneleigh Group partners as a gain for young people or society. Rather young people are

understood as marking time. However, despite this rich youth culture, as Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) point out, 'some young people may be able to take advantage of this extension of youth, others may find it a frustrating time during which their sense of themselves and of their place in society seems indeterminate and unresolved' (p. 502-503). There is no doubt that, for some young people, this is a difficult time with serious negative consequences as understood by them as well as by their communities.

Beck (1992) developed the idea of the risk society. In his view current society can be defined by the nature of the risks it faces and the impact of these on people. Risks in life, he claims, are large scale, often global and beyond the control or influence of the citizen or the state. Bois-Reymond and Blasco claim that 'youth ... is a life condition that is marked by unpredictability, vulnerability and reversibility' (Bois-Reymond and Blasco, 2003, p. 20). Hall *et al.* (1999) apply Beck's ideas of a risk society to youth transition concluding that '... a process that was more or less straightforward has become increasingly protracted and complex.' They argue that

in part, this complexity reflects a freeing up of established patterns of transition. There is a sense in which youth transitions are now more open-ended and fluid. The notion of 'individualism' is of relevance here ... signifying a decline in the coherence and certainty of once established patterns of reproduction, and a corresponding increase in individuals' capacity for self-determination.

(p. 502: original emphasis)

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) explain these changes as breakdowns in some aspects of the old order such as, critically, social networks and constraints. They believe that every day young people have to negotiate the new hazards of late modernity seeing its impact as a significant new challenge.

Jeffs and Smith (2002) see three trends in society at the centre of a new challenge to young people and youth work; firstly globalisation, and then, like Furlong and Cartmel (1997) and Hall *et al.* (1999), the risk society and individualisation. They highlight Beck's idea of

‘rootless new cosmopolitans’ (Jeffs and Smith, 2002) and Bauman’s notion of fragmentation leading ‘to matters relating to meaning, identity and ethics being removed from the public domain and recast as the responsibility of the individual’ (Jeffs and Smith, 2002). Such ideas support Henderson *et al.*’s (2007) recognition of the importance of social mobility. However, as well as indicating the importance of mobility, and the problems with developing the resources to be mobile, Beck and Bauman imply that becoming socially mobile has its own associated risks and problems for young people.

Within this context Jeffs and Smith (2002) believe that groups and youth sub-cultures are breaking down. They see the group as ‘no longer the central focus for the individual but rather one of a series of foci or sites within which the individual can live out a selected, temporal role or identity ...’ (Jeffs and Smith, 2002). If this is so then projects such as the Stoneleigh Project could be understood as providing such a temporal community that can be visited and revisited specifically to address these issues of meaning, identity, and ethics. Alternatively, it may be understood as an attempt to locate these matters back into the public domain with a collective, cross-generational responsibility.

As Mizen (2004) points out, state policies have tended to marginalise a group of young people and then construct them as problematic. Policies aimed at tackling these problems are directed at the public institutions of work, education and training. However, as Bynner *et al.* (1997) and Henderson *et al.* (2007) show, many of the resources on which young people draw in order to address the problems of transition to adulthood are situated in the social world of peer groups and communities, and the private world of families and of moral development, identity construction and personal well being. In a context in which young people are understood to be responsible for their own development social capital and the social networks in which to invest are critical, especially to those ‘getting by’ or dealing with the impacts of ‘getting nowhere’.

Young (1999) suggests that, rather than defining youth as a time of transition, it could be characterised as the point in life at which a person acquires a critical awareness of themselves and the world they are in. With this awareness, she claims, comes the task of

reflexively constructing an identity that is virtuous, that is congruent with the values the young person adopts. This, Young believes, is a process that continues throughout life. It is, she claims, its initiation that can be used to define the idea of youth as a beginning rather than a transition. At this time, it is possible to explore identity through education, work, civil life and recreation as well as consumption.

Hall *et al.* (1999) also widen the notion of youth transition by referring to what they term a wider and more generous definition of citizenship. In their view current policy has moved towards an understanding of citizenship as 'active' and 'normative'. This, they claim, involves the themes of 'belongingness, independence and equality, responsibility and participation, and shared existence and identity'. They go on to state that 'in present-day political exhortations about the importance of good citizenship it is invariably this normative sense of citizenship that is being shaped and (re)defined...' (p. 504). Concern for the transition of young people to adulthood has, in Hall *et al.*'s view, been extended to include concerns that young people take an active responsibility within civil society as well as concerns that they are able to gain access to the 'rights' that go with adulthood.

Colley, Hoskins, Parveva and Boetzelen (2007) also define the social inclusion of young people in society as concerning participation in civil society as well as employment. However, they comment that it remains unclear how much governments or European institutions think they should be directly involved in supporting civil life.

The definition of citizenship that is used in social policy to audit young peoples' participation is, Smith, Lister, Middleton and Cox (2005) claim, a narrow one that relates only to young people's involvement in education and employment. In their view young people hold to two concepts of citizenship. The first, which relates to this narrower definition, is that of 'respectable economic independence' (p. 432). For example they report that young people agreed that being unemployed made people somehow 'second class citizens'. The second and broader concept was of the 'socially constructive citizen' (p. 346) by which they understand a range of actions from 'obeying the law' to 'helping others and having a positive impact' (p. 346). In the view of Smith *et al.* the narrower

definition leads to an enhanced citizenship. Their research concluded that only a small number of marginalised young people did not understand themselves as citizens. They add that young people think of citizenship as a fluid and dynamic process in which they actively construct their identities as citizens. Young people, they conclude, regard this as a life long project during which they judge themselves to be more or less citizens contingent on their situations. In Smith *et al*'s view, this would indicate that, rather than providing education for citizenship, more recognition should be made of the acts of citizenship, as broadly defined, in which young people are engaged.

Yates and Payne (2006) also suggest that labels based on employment or educational status and applied by social policy to young people can be counter-productive. They highlight the concept of 'NEET's' (not in education, employment or training), as a focus for intervention. In their view this label hides a diverse range of situations and experiences from more targeted and effective intervention.

Nevertheless, Mizen (2004) and Henderson *et al.* (2007) recognise that those marginalised from work by current structural factors and social policy are also marginalised from social relations and civil society and so, potentially, from citizenship of any kind. This suggests a spectrum of a perception of engagement with social action from none through passive obedience to active engagement with social change. Ellis (2004) suggests that young people experience three main barriers to acting as agents of positive social change. She identifies these as 'it's not my problem', 'it's not my responsibility' and 'a sense of helplessness' (p. 89). She recommends that the appropriate response to this would be education that results in 'empowering them to act for positive change by working with them to build group consciousness that will be advantageous to the goals of positive social change for all' (p. 100).

Education and social networks help young people to engage with civil society as well as employment. Whilst Bynner *et al* (1997), Jeffs and Smith (2002) and Mizen (2004) argue that formal education has increasingly abandoned its role in preparing young people for citizenship, it remains a substantial aspect of the school curriculum and an aim of many

youth work projects. Henderson *et al.* (2007) report that, despite concerns for the alienation of young people from political and social life, this, for their study group, was so only for those 'going nowhere' and, to some degree for those 'getting by'. In these cases they report a lack of respect for politicians, a disinclination to vote based on claims that the views of young people are not represented or that voting does not make a difference, and a lack of engagement with civil society politically or socially. These findings are similar to those of a Prince's Trust study that interviewed a large, UK wide cohort of young adults that could be described as representative of those 'going nowhere' (Prince's Trust, 2004). Evans (2002) came to the same conclusions from her study of young people from Derby. She adds that it is also worth noting that young people in work understood this as a means to gain an income rather than as a social network or a meaningful contribution to society.

Henderson *et al.* (2007) also remark that those without the resources to find work and with no other means of support are unable to attain other benchmarks of adulthood in the private domain such as independent living, a long term relationship or, in some cases, parenthood. The latter is more complex as they also report a higher incidence of young parents amongst those without educational achievements or stable work.

Interestingly, for the inter-generational project of the Stoneleigh Group, Jeffs and Smith (2002) describe the consequences of 'individuals placing themselves at the centre of their plans and reflexively forg(ing) their own biographies' (p. 52) as the possibility that 'youth' is no longer determined by age. They think that, as experience is uncoupled from age and locality, so the experience that is described as 'youth' is dispersed across ages. One unexpected outcome of the Stoneleigh Project was the personal benefits described by the adult mentors and host community mentors reported in Chapter 12; outcomes often similar to and as far reaching as those reported by participants.

Youth Transitions

The authors above all concur that one significant construction of youth is as a time of transition to adulthood. It is seen by the state and by society as a time to find a public identity founded on educational achievements and employment (Blasco et al., 2003). The

milestones in this transition remain conventionally those of acquiring meaningful work and, in the private domains of life, entering a stable relationship and having your own home. However, as Bynner *et al.* (1997), Bynner *et al.* (2002), Furlong and Cartmel (1997) and Henderson *et al.* (2007) describe the pathways to these symbols of adulthood are considerably more varied than 50 years ago, take substantially longer and, for many, are not achieved.

Bois-Reymond and Blasco (2003) characterise modern youth transitions as yo-yo transitions, young people oscillating between temporary and part time work and education and training. In some cases they suggest transition is even reversed as young people return to earlier stages in education or employment.

The Stoneleigh Group described themselves as supporting marginalised young people in transition from youth to adult. In a statement in their paper introducing the Stoneleigh Project the Stoneleigh Group described the needs of young people as they saw them.

Making the transition from youth to adult has always been difficult. Some of the milestones - to worker, parent and home maker, for example - have been delayed. Others have been marginalised. Those that remain are often entered into without the intergenerational guidance they require to be effective. During this time young people need to explore and experiment, reject the norms of society and the oppression of adults and seek out spaces and roles in which they can express their individual talents and beliefs.

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Like the Stoneleigh Group, Roche and Tucker (1997) describe youth transition as a move from dependence to relative independence characterised by three key transitions. These they think are from education to work, a housing transition from the family home, and a relationship transition from parents and carers as the central significant others to friends, partners and children taking this place.

The partners in the Stoneleigh Group who work directly with young people also identify some or all of these transitions in their own statements of purpose (see Appendix 4). The emphasis in these statements places a particular focus on the transition to work, for example Eden Community Outdoors state that their programme ‘reconnects the community with the energy of young people and the value of meaningful work’. This leaves home making and building relationships to more nebulous statements such as Mobex’s belief that their programme helps ‘explore personal and social issues’. The Stoneleigh Project is therefore, in some respects, an extension of the work of its members.

Rogers (1997b) claims that, despite the conventional benchmarks, the nature of this transition has changed radically in the contexts and with the risks outlined above. For example Payne (1998) states that young people leaving education at 16 are three times more likely to be without a job six months later in 1996 than they were only eight years earlier. This is in spite of an ‘increasingly small’ number of school leavers at this age. Elias, McKnight, Pan and Pierre (2002) confirm that this is still the case five years later.

Payne (2000) offers statistics for young people in transition after compulsory schooling and who are not in education, employment or training; a situation she considers to be especially risky. It is this ‘getting nowhere’ group that the Stoneleigh Group partners understood as marginalised. 6 percent of young people were likely to be in this situation for 6 months or more. She found it affected females more than males and that the degree of ‘risk’ involved (defined as the probability of not exiting the situation) was affected by class, gender, ethnicity and location. Payne is writing from a policy perspective and is seeking to identify risks in a way that are amenable to institutional intervention. She sees them as external to the world of the young person and therefore capable of being influenced. She is trying to identify a ‘most at risk’ population of young people and propose strategies that can be implemented to reduce the risks this group face.

The Stoneleigh Group partners also understood the modern world of a young person as riskier than in the past and understood these risks to be largely external to the world of the young person. For them, low achievement in education and problematic family

backgrounds were major predictors of problems finding work. Finding vocational training or work is the major target for the young people on their programmes. Their approach is to support and resource the young person in 'getting a life' (p. 16), as Rogers (1997a) put it, or 'becom(ing) the key actors in their own transitions' as Walther and McNeish (2003) describe it, by restoring self-belief and social networks together with educational, and sometimes work, opportunities. Becoming involved with young people of school age who are underachieving at school or are excluded from it is one response to a feeling of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group that it is the educational system that is not meeting the needs of some young people. The belief was that an informal educational approach would act as a handrail long enough to restore the young person to vocational training post-16 numerate and literate. Alternatively the aspiration may be lower key with claims being made that their programmes help young people avoid the social ills of gangs, drugs and alcoholism.

The partners are also critical of the work available to young people seeing the 'knowledge society of late modernity' as offering too few meaningful work opportunities for those not intellectually gifted or socially typical. For example The Arthur Rank Centre was founded with the aim of providing young people of a practical bent with training in order to gain work in agriculture and horticulture. On the other hand The Prince's Trust helps train and finance young people to set up their own businesses seeing marginalised young people as a creative resource. For the target group of the Stoneleigh Project this support for the transition to work involves creating volunteer work opportunities within the youth work of the partner organisations.

Helve and Bynner (2007) offer a more positive interpretation of the modern experience of youth transition in Europe.

Young people's networks and trust-based relationships are not only a manifestation of growing up as a 'sub-culture response' to the oppressive structures and instruments of coercion of the adult world, but a vital means of demonstrating how society can shape up to the new. In seeking to weaken, if not to sever, the strong ties

to family that are the hallmark of childhood, adolescents find their own modes and strategies for relating to each other and the wider world, which in many respects matches modern realities better than those of adults.

(p. 9)

Whilst Helve and Bynner (2007) go on to refer to the capability of young people to build relations through the internet and mobile phones their view still chimes with the funding director Colin's belief, albeit in his case developed in the context of values rather than technologies, in the importance of supporting young people for example 'in the world of work (in which) young people should not be seen as simply some kind of problem but as one of the major means of re-invigoration' (p. 10).

During the 90s research began to highlight that the issue of youth transition was extending beyond 18 to affect the 18-25 year old population. Furlong and Cartmel (1997) describe this change. They claim that after the Second World War youth transition was still managed collectively, supported and constructed by the community, and with a trajectory from school to work largely defined by class, gender and race. It was a pathway often completed, for the majority by 16 years of age. Today they believe this transition is considerably more individualised and fragmented and is often not completed until 25 or later (Bynner et al., 2002; Blasco et al., 2003; IARD, 2001). Arnett (2006) proposes the term 'emerging adulthood' for this new group in society.

Williamson (1997) suggests that, instead of achieving citizenship, that, at 18, some young people experience '... a chronic condition of helplessness and hopelessness...; a crisis both reflecting and creating the symbolic prolongation of youth' (p. 183). He goes on to claim that, at 20, personal development for those marginalised from traditional pathways to adulthood stops. Without the resources to complete the transition, but with societal expectations that they should, Williamson claims that 'despondency' (p. 183) is the result and that some remain 'trapped as teenagers' (p. 184). These claims are widely supported by other authors, for example the cohort studies of Bynner *et al.* (1997) and Henderson *et al.* (2007) and the work of Mizen (2004), all discussed above. Walther and McNeish (2003)

suggest that this is a European wide phenomenon that ‘may constitute a major threat to future social cohesion’ (Blasco et al., 2003, p. 3).

However, Evans (2002) believes that, even amongst those most disadvantaged that very few report a ‘fatalistic’ (p. 513) attitude. Evans comments that

respondents in the UK groups feel ‘forced’ into unemployment schemes and therefore not ‘in control’ while at the same time feeling individually responsible for their predicament. They believed it was down to them to get out of their situation, despite the negative environment. They experienced stress in dealing with their situation, and emphasised ‘being realistic’ about what they can achieve’ (p. 509: original emphasis).

Evans offers a different view suggesting that her studies indicate that young people marginalised on their pathway to adulthood still have a sense of agency but that this is experienced as frustrated.

The authors cited above claim that transition, or youth in transition, or both, have become thought of as a problem. At the same time they think the task of addressing this problem has, to some degree, been transferred from the community to the individual. In all cases the partners, like Evans (2002), thought that young people perceive themselves as having the capability to address their own problems with the right help. Whilst they may not see young people as ‘the problem’ they are attempting to help young people tackle the problems they face for themselves locating the task of managing transition with them by enhancing their capacity for agency. This view is endorsed by the European Commission who state that ‘despite the more complex social and economic context, young people are well equipped to adapt’ (European Commission, 2001).

Youth Transition as Problem

The way in which young people are understood to be a problem and how the members of the Stoneleigh Group understood this is worth exploring further. Griffin (1997) thinks of transition as a problem. She supports the view that the trends in our society have resulted not only in individualisation but also in an externalising of the problems of growing up from the community onto the young person. In this sense the partner organisations could be understood as an extension and professionalisation of the community's role and a counter to the trend Griffin identifies. Nevertheless, the partners also support the shift of the locus of control to the young person as the agent of the process.

Griffin explores how this transition became understood as a problem. She makes the distinction between the idea of adolescence, which she understands as based on biological factors especially puberty, and the concept of youth, which she describes as socially constructed. In her view the divergence of the age ranges that these two ideas are supposed to encompass is the source for much of the problematisation of young people (she claims the average age of puberty has decreased to 12 whilst the average age of financial independence has increased to 25). Griffin claims that much of the construction concerning young people defines them either as 'youth as trouble' or 'youth in trouble'. For example current UK and European policy statements on young people categorise them as student, labour or problem (IARD, 2001). As a result Griffin believes adults view young people as either 'deviant or deficient'. Policies are designed on the assumptions of the need for support or control. This approach she believes to be heavily influenced by the 'storm and stress' model that emerges from the biological understanding of hormonal changes during puberty. It is no accident, she believes, that 'being in trouble' is a euphemism for becoming pregnant and that such a biological event is given a high profile as a 'problem'. She claims this is the origin of the tendency to understand young people as problematic and the cause of young people's problems as being located in the young person thereby taking attention away from other possible social causes.

Griffin's (1997) concern that adults construct young people as the cause of trouble or as being in trouble echoes Kelly's (2003) concern that adult anxiety concerning young people, what Cohen (1972) termed 'moral panic', appear to young people as mistrust.

These, Kelly believes, have a range of negative consequences including policies of surveillance and regulation.

Griffin (1997) claims that:

Dominant representations of youth in mainstream academic literature operate in conjunction with social welfare policies to target specific groups of young people as in need of ‘surveillance’, ‘protection’ and/or ‘care’. Radical perspectives would tend to construct particular sections of young people as in need of support and empowerment. It is this focus on *power relations* ... that distinguish radical approaches from the mainstream perspective.

(p. 24: original emphasis).

Griffin’s remarks indicate a second set of adults and institutions that she calls ‘radical’ in their approach. This radicalism includes the elements of freedom, trust, and lack of surveillance, not only by adults of young people but also as experienced by young people. This has a direct bearing on the mutual and egalitarian approach that the Stoneleigh Group organisations claimed to take (see Chapter 5). MacDonald and Marsh (2001), Raffo and Reeves (2000), and The Prince’s Trust (2004) provide qualitative studies that support this view identifying trusted adults, often in professional roles, as significant social capital especially at times of crisis in the process of transition.

Research conducted by The Prince’s Trust (2004) found that young people also consider the world to be problematic and themselves as part of the problem. Their research identifies:

There are currently 649,000 16–24 year olds economically inactive and not in full time education. A further 405,000 are unemployed and not in full time education. This is almost 16 per cent of the age group. Many of these young people are not only

facing significant barriers, but – crucially – they aren't picked up soon enough, while there is a realistic prospect of getting their lives back on track.

(p. 4)

For those young people defined by the Prince's Trust in its report as marginalised those between the ages of 14 and 17 reported that the two main factors they considered to hold them back were their own bad behaviour and lack of confidence. 18 to 21 year olds also felt confidence was an issue along with their criminal records and lack of qualifications. Those over 21 felt they also lacked experience, and young women in this age class also felt they were held back by parental roles. Also in this age class the young men, for the first time, identified an external concern that was the lack of suitable employment, a point made by several Stoneleigh Group partners. For example the Arthur Rank Centre seek to create agricultural and rural 'work opportunities at which practical young people can succeed' (see Table 1). According to Hunt (1989) youth development out of doors seeks to address issues of personal behaviour, confidence, lack of experience, and the development of life skills for employment among other aims. From the perspective of young people involved in the Stoneleigh Project it would seem to be an attractive form of support.

Youth Development

The Stoneleigh Group partners sometimes understood young people as 'in trouble' but they did not see them as the cause of the trouble. On the contrary they understood them as an opportunity so far let down by society. For example The Prince's Trust aim to 'realise their potential and transform their lives' in order to 'make a positive contribution to their communities and society' (see Appendix 4).

Rogers (1997b) claims the concept of 'young person' as a site for social, moral and political concern is relatively new, perhaps 150 years old. Nevertheless he believes the situation of young people has undertaken rapid changes, none more so than in the last 50 years. He concurs with Furlong and Cartmel (1997) that the questions of class and gender as social determinants of adult roles have been questioned as has the locus of the construction of the identity of the emerging individual.

Young (1960) believes that youth development as a cultural response to the need to support young people in these changes emerged during the Victorian period. He argues a profound change in British Christianity led to a moral revolution. Rogers (1997b) describes this shift as launching a project to ‘... bring an external moral gaze to, and to foster an internal self-surveillance upon, the many faces of evil’ (p. 9). As a result he believes that ‘young people found themselves the target of a spectrum of moral entrepreneurs’ (p. 9) both at home, at work, and in the public sphere. The members of the Stoneleigh Group could readily be described as the outcomes of a small number of ‘moral entrepreneurs’. Dick Alcock (Endeavour Training and The Arthur Rank Centre), Simon Weston (Weston Spirit), The Prince of Wales (The Prince’s Trust), Brian Ware (Mobex), and Sue Bennett (Eden Community Outdoors) are the founders of their respective voluntary organisations. Each of these organisations continues to draw heavily on the beliefs of their respective founders to direct the intentions of their various ‘projects’. The socio-political histories of youth organisations, especially those that work out of doors, and their influence on the beliefs and practices of the Stoneleigh Group will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5.

Like the early youth workers the Stoneleigh Group also emphasised moral development. Embedded in the Stoneleigh Project were beliefs in a set of what Brahma Kumaris (Gill-Kozul, 1995) call universal or ‘living values’ that lead to ‘right living’. Alongside this belief was also a belief in a plurality of expressions of these values. A central idea for the Stoneleigh Project was the belief in the importance of individuals experiencing some connection with the universal source of ‘right living’ and exploring how this informed their own unique selves and their choices of action in the world. The terms ‘leadership’ and ‘spirituality’ were used, sometimes interchangeably, to capture this idea of moral beings determining their own paths.

Developing her argument of youth as the beginning of a time of critical reflection that helps young people to find what virtue means to them and to find a virtuous way to live by those values, Young (1999) claims that the support and accompaniment of a young person on this path is the central role of youth work. Evans and Heinz (1995) ‘explored the real experiences and needs of young women and young men in making their way as citizens, focusing on the interfaces of personal lives, work and learning’ (p. 11). They conclude that

‘educational and social policies should assist in this process, fostering independence, autonomy and active citizenship, within a vision of the future’ (p. 11).

The aspirations of the Stoneleigh Group go further than social and moral concerns and enter the political domain. Colin, a Rank Foundation director involved in helping the Stoneleigh Group obtain funding from his organisation, was motivated to work with the Group by his own belief that is summarised in Chapter 2 as 'that the idealism of young people in touch with their core values is a force for good in the world. He believed that, if these ideals were supported, they would flourish and the young people holding them would become agents of change in a world desperately in need of a restoration or even transformation of values.' Two of the Stoneleigh Group partners (Eden Community Outdoors and the Iona Community) explicitly hold beliefs in the notion that marginalised young people are more likely to become agents of change in their communities because they have little left to lose. They think, based on their anecdotal experience of working with young people, that children succeeding at school are unlikely to break from the conventional path available to them or challenge the values of the world they are seeking to join. On the other hand they believe that marginalised young people, with appropriate adult support, are more likely to transform their circumstances and some aspect of the world around them in the process.

According to the research conducted by the Prince's Trust (2004) marginalised young people feel there is a lack of provision both in helping them with the issues they face and in helping them to find things to do. The report found that young people are more likely to respond to organisations that are voluntary, that seek them out, and who then maintain an ongoing relationship through the same adult who is a volunteer. This suggests that voluntary youth organisations have a key role to play in reaching these young people and the report recommends a significant role for these groups in the overall mix of youth work provision.

The Stoneleigh Project set out to support young people in managing their own lives and in helping them to address some of the causes of the problems in their lives to be found in the

communities around them. However, the Stoneleigh Group also had its own agenda for social change and understood the young people involved in the Stoneleigh Project as agents of that change. This idea of agency and the political context in which it rests within the Stoneleigh Group will be examined in Chapter 13.

Transition and Risk, Structure and Agency

Rapport and Overing (2000) define agency as ‘...the capability, the power, to be the source and originator of acts; agents are the subjects of action’. This definition fits well with the liberal and radical approaches to youth development discussed further in Chapter 5. These approaches claim to support young people through related ideas such as empowerment for example from outdoor development (Hopkins and Putnam, 1993) and from informal education (Jeffs and Smith, 1999). The Stoneleigh partners make similar claims, for example ‘realis(ing) potential’ (Prince’s Trust from Appendix 4) and ‘transform(ing) their lives’ (Prince’s Trust from Appendix 4) in order to become ‘active participants in their communities’ (Mobex from Appendix 4).

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) discuss a long-standing philosophical debate between those that claim people have a degree of agency and those that believe life is largely determined by structural factors such as class, race, and gender. They conclude that, whilst class and gender especially can still be determinants, young people in the last 20 years can best be understood from a modernist perspective. They suggest two central ideas as useful ways to understand this. The first is Giddens’ (1991) idea of ‘structuration’ that offers a model that provides for a degree of agency within structural constraints. The second is Beck’s (1992) notion of a risk society in which the risks of modern life have increased and are understood to be beyond the influence of the individual and yet the individual is the locus of response to these risks a process he termed ‘individualisation’. Arnett (2004) claims that the extended period of youth is a response to this changing context calling the life stage ‘emerging adulthood’. Elder (1998) describe the navigation of this phase as ‘pathways’ whilst Roberts and Parsell (1989) discuss this process as a series of ‘trajectories’ involving individuals in a series of choices leading to adult identities. They all hold that young people experience considerably more agency and social mobility in this process than previously.

Bynner (2005) points out that, whilst the concept of emerging adulthood is a helpful one, it is based on a psychological perspective using theoretical concepts of development. Such a generic model misses, he claims, the diversity of social situations experienced by young people during their development. In Bynner's view many of the traditional structural issues of class, race and gender remain of significant concern especially to those who are marginalised by social, educational, geographical or employment issues. He also highlights the increasing number of higher education drop-outs who then become marginalised and subject to structural factors as well. Bynner refers to Putnam's (2000) work in highlighting a further concern that, whilst agency during emerging adulthood may be enhanced for many young people, Putnam claims that trust and social capital through which agency might be exercised have significantly reduced, a trend he understands as another consequence of 'individualisation' in a 'hyper-modern' society.

Arnett (2006), in arguing with Bynner's (2005) emphasis on the importance of structural factors in emerging adulthood, suggests that these factors may be more or less important to some people in certain contexts and not others. For example, he supports Bynner's view that unemployment is experienced as a structural disadvantage but that, in a wider model of citizenship such as that proposed by Smith, Lister, Middleton and Cox (2005), he claims that emerging adults in Europe, including the UK, have considerably more agency in their identity formation and that problems of agency are as likely to be personal or social as structural.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) explore the effect of these changes in society on youth transitions and on the processes of 'social reproduction' that take place as young people reproduce or create the adult world through their 'trajectories' from child to adult. To explain the traditional method of social reproduction they develop Roberts' (1995) metaphor of a train journey. The authors suggest that the passenger knew which station they would board at, which train they would catch and what the destination would be. It was a transition that was highly structured with little opportunity for individual agency to affect the outcome. They propose that the current situation is more like a car journey. Whilst there is one starting point there are many routes, many intermediate stops, and

diverse destinations. What is more, the young person is a driver making choices and not a passenger constrained by circumstances.

Building on the metaphor Evans and Heinz (1995) can be understood to comment on the approaches taken by young people to navigation. They identify four styles of transition. These offer a more nuanced interpretation that draws on the general trends highlighted by Furlong and Cartmel (1997) toward greater agency yet taking account of those Bynner (2006) identifies who do not experience this trend through marginalised or other circumstances. 'Strategic transition behaviour' replaces the original 'train journey'. Routes are well planned with well-established maps, clear destinations and well-prepared navigators. 'Step-by-step transition behaviour' compares with the car journey with no clear route or destination. Nevertheless the young people are well prepared to make choices as the journey progresses. 'Taking chances transition behaviour' involves setting off on a journey with no route or destination and making choices along the way based on what will be found challenging. Evans and Heinz indicate that this approach has an emphasis on learning about the person on the journey whilst the previous behaviours were intended as a means to find a way through the maze to a successful outcome. 'Wait-and-see transition behaviour' is characterised by Evans and Heinz as 'learned helplessness'. The young person has no sense of 'navigating' and makes route choices only to avoid matters getting worse.

Raffo and Reeves (2000) conducted empirical research that supports Furlong and Cartmel's theories. They identified the same contextual changes described by them. These, they believe, have created 'a whole new set of contradictions and paradoxes, and made outcomes more insecure, requiring young people to be even more sophisticated in dealing with everyday tasks and situations' (p. 148). Like Beck (1992) they see this as heightening the risk of everyday life for young people though they acknowledge that the degree of risk is subjective and largely constructed by the individual or by those expressing concern for the individual.

This view is also held by Lawy (2002). He identifies the relationship between risk (as perceived by the young person) and identity, as critical and essential elements in the process of learning for transition. He believes young people make decisions and choices in a way that is integrated with their evolving identities. In this sense the risk is subjective and held within the network of social capital the individual is centred in. It is not an external or objective risk from outside of the personal and social world of the individual. These two sets of perceptions of the degree of risk are, they claim, often at odds.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) support this view finding that agency and opportunity could be considerable even when the young person was disadvantaged by factors such as family and neighbourhood poverty, high unemployment locally or sink schools. They use the term 'individualised systems of social capital' to describe the way in which young people find and create opportunities for transition. They define social capital as 'a dynamic, social, spatially, culturally, temporally and economically embedded group, network or constellation of social relations, which has the young person at the core of the constellation and which provides authentic opportunities for everyday learning' (p. 150). What is more the young person is an actor at the core who is making choices and influencing the relationships in order to learn and move. The relations in this network are thought to both augment and constrain the individual.

Putnam (2000) and Arnett (2006) also suggest that the dimensions of social and civic life are significant areas in which young people exercise agency in the construction of their identities. Putnam (2000), discussing the personal and social consequences of disconnection in American society, for which he blamed television and the move to the suburbs, identified a decline in social capital as a result. In his view social capital, raised through civic connections, rivals marriage and affluence as a predictor of happiness. As well as happiness he believes that social capital enhances health and leads to safer public spaces. Whilst Raffo and Reeves (2000) are claiming that young people can be more capable than Putnam suggests at creating social capital in a fragmented world there is no doubt in their minds that any breakdown in this process is a serious impediment to transition. Holland, Reynolds and Weller (2007) go further by rejecting a deficit model of social capital. They identify the many ways that young people in all kinds of situations

actively create social capital to help in their transitions to adulthood and build their identities.

The Stoneleigh Group hoped that, by supporting these ‘individualised systems of social capital’, they would enhance the capacity of individuals to manage their own transitions. Further it was their hope that these transitions would also take the form of agents of change. However, these authors highlight a tension concerning the point of view that is held when judgements of risk, agency, efficacy and value are being made. It is not clear from the Stoneleigh Group’s literature whether the participants are thought of as acting as agents of change on their own behalf, on behalf of the Stoneleigh Group, or on behalf of some larger social desire for change.

Raffo and Reeves (2000) have identified four types of individualised systems of social capital; weak, strong, changing and fluid. Weak systems are often the result of critical incidents such as moving home, leaving school and long-term illness. In this case the network is limited in extent and may be passive in nature. Strong systems can be constructive and support self-esteem. However, they can also hold individuals back or constrain them in counter-productive behaviours. Holland (2007) refers to this form of social capital as ‘bonding social capital’ and points out that by restraining the mobility of young people this form of social capital can trap them in situations of disadvantage. Changing systems create new opportunities that can be experienced as risky and unpredictable. Fluid systems have a quality and flexibility that support transition and movement by the individual whilst still providing support for diverse choices. Holland (2007) uses the term ‘bridging social capital’ to highlight the capacity this creates for young people to be socially mobile. Raffo and Reeves (2000) see this last system as the type that best supports young people in transition and so highlight the significance to them of mobility in youth to adult transition in modern social contexts in the UK.

MacDonald and Marsh’s (2001) qualitative study found that this way of understanding social capital could just as readily be present, though necessarily limited and bounded by circumstances, in situations of disadvantage. Equally they thought that young people in

advantaged situations can be at the centre of weak systems and unable to initiate the changes that could address this. This led them to question policies of social inclusion that equate exclusion with disadvantage.

Côté (2002) offers a model of identity capital that recognises the assets held by an individual are crucial in any given context. His study concludes that, for youth in transition, the degree of agency the individual is able to call on is the most critical factor in negotiating what the individual perceives as a successful transition to adulthood. In so doing he highlights the importance he places on the role of young people in constructing their identities.

Evans (2002) thinks that the dualism between structure and agency is unhelpful. Her research revealed what she claims to be a situation that moves beyond the simplistic analysis made possible by ideas of structure and individualisation. In her view the idea of bounded agency, in which certain constraints are modified by the personal perceptions of a young person for actions or decisions, is a better concept to describe this process. Young people, she claims, actively seek to maximise their opportunities and minimise their risks within the structural constraints by which they are limited and according to their personal competences and confidence. These constraints, she suggests, consist of both social and historical contexts as well as social relations in peer groups. In Evans' view, young people do not perceive themselves as the passive recipients of social capital but the active creators of it.

The views of these authors, whilst differing in degree, all emphasise the importance of the personal and social worlds of a young person in actively establishing social capital that can influence their pathways to adulthood in the public worlds of education and employment and so to a completed transition to an adult identity. It is the view of many of them that social policy should take account of this and not leave it up to the voluntary sector to support and resource these aspects of a young person's development. Some account seems to be being taken of this position. Kovacheva and Pohl (2007) claim that, across Europe, the one trend in social inclusion policy for young people that can be discerned is what they

term 'activation' that is 'mobilising individuals to engage more actively in the process of their own labour market integration and wider social inclusion' (p. 37).

It will be interesting to take note of the biographies of the participants in the Stoneleigh Project in relation to these concepts. Systems of social capital may help interpret the narratives of participants and the contribution played by the programme in these unfolding biographies. The conditions of high modernity are characterised according to Beck (1992) by the idea of the 'risk society'. Furlong and Cartmel (1997), applying this to the world of young people, describe it as a society in which the structures of race, gender and class still have a major effect on the lives and the opportunities of young people. However, they claim the solutions to finding a life path is increasingly constructed by the individual rather than collectively. The risks in life, for instance in finding work, a partner or a home, the three defining tasks of transition to adulthood according to Roche and Tucker (1997) are increasingly the problem of the individual. They offer the example of a person out of work who would now be understood as lacking in the necessary skills for employment rather than the victim of a reduction in the labour force. This would result in the individual seeking retraining rather than the collective creating work opportunities for which the person was skilled.

Putnam (2000) also discusses the degree and quality of trust in relationships as a central component that supports the building of social capital. Trust was also a critical component of Raffo and Reeves' (2000) model of young people's networks. Stoddart (2004) explored the potential of an outdoor project in Cumbria to develop social capital. The participants, identified and recruited for being marginalised members of Cumbrian communities, saw trust and reciprocity as critical to the development of feelings of empowerment and sustained networks that Stoddart understood to provide enhanced social capital. Like The Prince's Trust report (Prince's Trust, 2004) and the views of Jeffs and Smith (1999), she also noticed that the manner of the approach to the young people in the first instance, and the provision of follow up opportunities after the main outdoor residential experience, were important factors in successfully building trust and reciprocity

Conclusion

It will be helpful to summarise the ideas covered in this chapter in order to explore them further later once the theories of Bernstein have been introduced in Chapter 8. They will provide a context with which to interpret the Stoneleigh Project.

The Idea of Youth

According to the academic writers cited in this chapter the construction of identity during teenage years became increasingly the task of the individual rather than of society since the rise of moral concerns for young people in late Victorian times. This individualisation of the construction of a morality, a working life, relationships, and homemaking has been described as moving from being like that of a train passenger to that of a car driver. The former has an externally pre-determined destination whilst the latter has many more options and far more influence over the outcome. This change, it is believed, has been brought about by larger socio-economic shifts in society. It is thought that part of the consequence of this change is the growing idea of youth as a period of time in life, a period which has extended and in which the role of the young person has become more influential and diverse.

In order to adjust to these circumstances it is considered that young people have, to some degree, become the locus of control for their moral centres and for constructing their identities. In order to do this they are described as, to some degree, becoming actors in their own social networks and their own agents for choosing their paths into adulthood. There are mixed views concerning the degree to which class, gender and race have become less deterministic of adult roles amongst youth, especially marginalised young people. On balance it would seem to be still significant but more fragmented. Opportunities to transform personal situations are, it is suggested, more often realised.

One view of the purpose of this new time of youth is that it is 'necessary' in order to construct spaces in which the values of society are rejected and identity can be more widely explored. This is considered to be one way in which traditional pathways are being disrupted. It is more widely accepted that young people build horizontal networks of social

capital amongst their own peer groups and are less likely to develop strong vertical relations with adults. These networks have been characterised as variously weak, strong, changing, and fluid, of which the latter is thought to support the greatest degree of agency and so, it is claimed, best supports the process of transition.

Within these networks the risks of growing up in a modern world are often thought to be differently perceived by the young person from the way that they are perceived by adults. However, it is clear that some are not prepared for managing their transition or lose direction. They find it hard to see a trajectory and/or lack confidence to take it. In these cases they often seek sustenance and security as well as identity from within their peer group. These young people think that the problems of transition that they experience are largely their own problem (for example poor education and criminal records) although they also believe the lack of suitable work is a contributory factor.

Institutional Views of Youth

It is claimed that many people and institutions in society see the transition of young people or the young people themselves as a problem and therefore in need of control. They are considered deviant or deficient and so society supports or implements policies of surveillance and regulation. This, it is claimed, leads to a lack of trust by young people in adults.

Even the goods of the period of youth are thought of as a compensation for a proper trajectory to adulthood and not of value in themselves.

Others understand the problem differently placing it external to the world of young people. They think of marginalised young people as vulnerable and excluded, lacking the power, resources and/or social capital to transform their situations. These people and institutions construct young people as in need of support and care. From the perspective of a young person this can also seem like regulation and surveillance. Nevertheless these organisations also tend to think that individual agency is the key to helping the young person transform their own circumstances.

Many believe there to be a lack of a pedagogic handrail to support young people through this extended period of youth. Institutions are thought to be lagging behind the changing needs of society. Voluntary youth agencies are seeking to address this and claim to provide support to young people in the transition from youth to adult. They understand the problems experienced by young people to be external to their situation including specifically the types of work available and the nature of formal schooling.

Voluntary youth work organisations focus on the social and public aspects of a young person's life and believe that finding appropriate work should remain a responsibility of the public domain. They also believe that engaging young people with adults is important. The problem of trust is recognised.

It is a useful question to consider whose agenda is being fulfilled by the work of voluntary youth organisations, especially those that make claims to support the development of agents of change in our society. The Stoneleigh Group partners believed they were supporting youth transition by developing agency and that this was an effective youth development strategy for young people who were experiencing their transitions as problematic. The Stoneleigh Group were also critical of aspects of modern society and saw the young people as potential agents of change in that society. This research follows the stories of the participants in order to consider the degree to which the pedagogic claims of supporting youth transition and enhancing the agency of the participants also supported the aspirations for social change. The focus of the research will be on how the experience of the Stoneleigh Project was understood by the young people as well as on how it is interpreted by the Stoneleigh Group. It will consider whether the young people think the Stoneleigh Project helped them in the secular transitions to their own homes, jobs, and families or whether they think it was encouraging the spiritual life of a new generation of social entrepreneurs.

Chapter 5:

Youth Development and Informal Education

Introduction

The introduction described the Stoneleigh Project as a combination of practices and beliefs that claim to draw on the traditions of voluntary youth work, informal education outdoors, and spiritual development. Voluntary youth organisations have a long history rooted in various emancipatory endeavours on behalf of young people, and social projects on behalf of society. This has created a history of practices and beliefs that have shaped the work of the members of the Stoneleigh Group and the context within which they operate. This chapter summarises this history paying attention to those aspects that relate to the aims of the Stoneleigh Group and the questions of this research.

Colonisation and Tradition

In the previous chapter I suggested that some of the shifts in society are understood by the cited authors to have placed the individual more centrally within the project of building an identity and choosing courses of action in life. The field of personal development through outdoor education has responded to these shifts. Glyptis (1991) suggests that these socio-economic changes affected the spaces people inhabited, the times during which people exercised degrees of freedom, and the resources they had to dispose of in pursuit of these goals. She describes how these had an embodied aspect in the physical freedoms such as the desire and the 'right to roam'. She also claims they had an affective aspect in the shifts of moral authority towards the individual and the 'improvement' of the working classes. In addition she argues there were also intellectual dimensions through 'education for leisure' and the 'broadening of horizons' as aspirations of a civilised society. All of these factors she claims were influenced extensively by social policies and the emerging and changing structures of the culture in which they reside.

The meanings and values attached to the organisations involved in these endeavours, state, private and voluntary, and the structures of the activities that were used as the content of their programmes, were specific to that culture in those times and places. However, the

organisations and activities have often persisted in some form and are involved in and used as vehicles for personal development today. Sometimes the meanings and values that they hold persist with them despite the cultural changes in the society within which they now operate. Sometimes the meanings and values change but the same activities are practised as tradition.

These may hold tacit understandings as a part of their structure that may not be perceived as constructive given their current use. However, the tacit nature of these underpinning values can leave them hidden from critical professional scrutiny. For example Loynes (2004a) describes the adoption of navigating using a map and compass as a central area of knowledge and skill in early youth movements such as the Scouts. These skills were first developed in young people working as soldiers to help them control their location in time and space on enemy terrain. Some of the early youth movements set out to prepare young men for war and these skills would have been directly relevant. However, over time this goal disappeared or was rejected. Nevertheless control in space and time by the use of map and compass as the established approach to navigating persisted. Good practice remains the control of a person's location in time and space and a spirit of self-reliance. A whole justification for this way of navigating has been constructed based on matters of safety and educational worth. Yet Loynes claims this is not the only way to navigate. Other approaches, such as mapless exploring without a predetermined destination and route or aural and narrative route descriptions, are based on different values and provide different outcomes that may be more suited to some modern educational purposes. Yet the use of map and compass is adopted largely uncritically as tradition.

Payne (2002) writes in a similar vein about white water kayaking in Australia where the activity is dislocated in space as well as time. He and Brookes (2002) argue that activities should evolve out of the context within which they are to be practised. These authors are writing in the context of modern Australia and from the perspective of education for sustainability. They describe this culture as suffering from an overbearing British imperialism on a people and landscape for which the practices of that culture are poorly suited. Whilst Loynes (2004a) supports their assertion that organisations and activities should be chosen with a critical awareness of their roots he does not propose that cultural

transfer from other times and other places should always be resisted. However, it does indicate the value of considering with care the interests of the colonising beliefs and practices before adopting them.

The Stoneleigh Group, as a result of its critical approach to pedagogy and evaluation, can be understood as a project seeking critical awareness of its roots whilst seeking to adopt, adapt, and create a diverse set of values and practices for a specific modern context. It can be understood as a project that wanted to resist the uncritical use of past practices, at the same time as seeking to influence current youth work practice and which, as a result, was also subject to colonising interests seeking to support or subvert its intentions.

These colonising pressures took place in what Williamson (1998) describes as the context of wider trends from agencies seeking to implement Government policy to involve the Youth Service in tackling what they perceived to be important social issues. Jeffs and Smith (2002) and Young (1999) comment on recent trends to co-opt youth work as a means to address social issues such as health, training, criminality and employment rather than providing a service with which to support young people experiencing these issues. Williamson (1998) also identifies this trend characterising the two forms of practice as 'person-centred and agenda-focussed approaches' (p. 2). He argues that, while the Youth Service should resist collusion and colonisation by other social institutions, it should not act on behalf of young people uncritically. He argues that it should be prepared to engage with these broader social agendas. He recognises that a democratic informal education must walk a tight rope in order to maintain the trust of young people whilst working to address these wider social concerns. The Stoneleigh Project was aiming to tackle just this dilemma by working with young people to help them to transform the social world into which they were moving as young adults.

Historical Influences

I discussed in Chapter 4 how Young (1960) suggests that during the Victorian period a profound change in British Christianity led to a moral revolution. This began a process that has seen the emergence of a moral diversity and the shift of the locus for the development

of that morality from society to the individual. The aims of outdoor education indicate that it has been engaged in this project of constructing the moral self though perhaps not always in support of the project.

The Emergence of Informal Education Out of Doors

Smith (1999) suggests that current practices in outdoor youth work owe their origins to the presence of the competing themes of conservative and radical, and liberating and oppressive trends that emerged during the early Victorian social reforms. He claims that these led to the emergence of informal education for young people. It was these Victorian reforms that first made use of the outdoors in their programmes.

Jeffs and Smith (1999) comment that informal education is most often defined by what it is not. It does not have a location such as a classroom or a curriculum for example. They claim that 'informal' is defined by the willingness of the adult to join in with an activity chosen by young people in an everyday setting, engage in conversation, and foster learning.

This informal learning, Jeffs and Smith believe, becomes 'education' when there is an intention to bring thoughts into the conscious world through activities that stimulate thinking in order to foster learning. This, they claim, works through direct conversation and they draw on Dewey (1995) to highlight the importance of the environment, both physical and social. Further, Jeffs and Smith claim that it becomes 'education' through commitment to a set of core values that they list as; respect for persons, the promotion of well being, truth, democracy and fairness, and equality. These they believe should inform both the content and the process of learning.

According to Jeffs and Smith (1999), under this definition, only some youth workers would describe themselves as informal educators. Others would claim to be informal educators some of the time. They might also use formal educational strategies and Jeffs and Smith see the relationship between these two as a continuum.

Various writers suggest that outdoor education can best be understood as an environment for learning. However, according to Barnes and Sharp (2004), Cooper (1998), Gair (1997) and Higgins (1996) it is an environment that can be thought of as a classroom and can have a curriculum. Thus it can also be seen as an environment for formal education. It might only become informal education, according to Jeffs and Smith, when the relationships with the young people take on the qualities they put forward and when these are embedded in an intention to support the process of learning within the framework of values they list.

According to Smith (1999) early forms of youth work were started by social reformers in the latter part of the 18th century. He describes the projects of various evangelical Christians who were responding to the physical and spiritual poverty they saw around them. He offers as examples the Sunday School movement, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides and the Boys Brigade. In the 19th century Smith describes how this work blossomed. Quoting Booton, Smith draws on the writings of Sweatman to illustrate the intentions of the time:

Sweatman's statement expresses a central idea, that the social condition of young people (mainly in this case, lads) warranted specific intervention with the aim of a general cultural improvement; that this need was urgent, and sufficiently extensive to require nothing less than a completely new type of social institution.

(p. 22)

These early evangelical programmes were joined in the latter part of the 19th century by more radical approaches that Jeffs and Smith (2002) claim sought to address the social and economic conditions of young people. These people 'shared a belief ... that the new economic and social order sponsored and sustained individualism thereby weakening civil society and organic community' (p. 44).

These included Emmeline Pethick who, in the 1890s introduced country holidays for girls as part of her work with girls and young women from London's West End 'where she won the affection of the high-spirited but frustrated girls by teaching them active games'

(Smith, 1997a). This could arguably be the first documented use of the outdoors for the purposes of the social education of young people in England. Smith believes Pethick's (1898) approach to be radical because he sees her work as seeking to influence the social context of the women through political action by herself and her colleagues and by the young women.

The conditions, not only of the home, but of the factory or workshop had to be taken into account. It became our business to study the industrial question as it affected the girls' employments, the hours, the wages, and the conditions. And we had also to give them a conscious part to take in the battle that is being fought for the workers, and will not be won until it is loyally fought by them.

(Smith, 1997a, p. 104).

The competing strands of radical and conservative educational approaches met in the work of two leading innovators of informal education for young people Ernest Thompson Seton and Robert Baden-Powell. Seton, who was English but brought up in the United States of America (USA), is described by Smith (2002) as developing the ideas of the Woodcraft Folk in the 1880s. They finally came to fruition with the first experimental camp in 1902. Smith states

... Seton came upon his Indian motif from two directions. First, he was concerned not merely to preserve resources for man's use, the reigning form of conservation, but also to defend the ecological balances of nature in the wild. The American Indian, he believed, had lived in harmony with those balances, whereas the white man destroyed them. Second, in reaction against his father, Seton exalted natural drives; this predisposition, combined with an interest in animal behaviour, led him to embrace Hall's instinct psychology and the idea of boyish savagery. Yet instead of seeing 'savagery' as merely a rung on the ladder to civilization the way Hall did, Seton came to value Indian life as an end in itself, until by 1915 he proposed a Red Lodge for men to learn the spirit of Indian religion.

The approach he proposed used camping out and various ceremonies, games and awards. Significantly, Ernest Thompson Seton did not follow the usual path of character builders by ensuing the preaching of conventional morality. Crucially, he made all offices elective and looked strongly to the associational life of the group ...

(p. 5)

Smith claims that Seton was a major influence on Baden-Powell and his development of the Boy Scout Movement (Smith, 1997c). According to Smith, Baden-Powell first came to be involved in informal education through the Boys Brigade. However Smith claims Seton became a critic of this movement and its emphasis on marching and drill. Baden-Powell's first experimental camp occurred in 1907 on Brownsea Island. This was followed by a lecture tour promoting his ideas to be found in his book 'Scouting for Boys' (Baden-Powell, 1908) Smith reports that Baden-Powell expressed a concern about the fitness of young men for war and their general physical and mental condition. He particularly emphasised physical deterioration and moral degeneracy. By 1908 over 10,000 boys and a number of girls, who had formed a parallel movement on a self-organising basis, attended the first conference for Boy Scouts.

Smith comments that Baden-Powell's ideas were strongly influenced by 19th century public school values of honour, loyalty and duty and the emphasis on activity and games as worthwhile. Despite these important conservative elements in Baden-Powell's approach Smith claims it would be simplistic to label him in this way. Baden-Powell was not solely concerned with duty. He quotes Baden-Powell (1909) as saying

Keep before your mind in all your teaching that the whole ulterior motive of this scheme is to form character in the boys - to make them manly, good citizens.... Aim for making each individual into a useful member of society, and the whole will automatically come on to a high standard.

(p. 361)

Smith suggests that Baden-Powell's notion of the good citizen involved self-reliance and unselfishness, which he sees as new departures in social education values. Although Smith does not believe Baden-Powell to have been a socialist he identifies some common beliefs between socialism and Baden-Powell mentioning in particular an opposition to the extremes of wealth and a dislike of the necessity of war. Smith points out that another central strand of Scouting is 'doing good'. This he understands as a notion of fellowship and mutuality perhaps reflecting the highly visible inequalities of the time.

Smith claims that both the conservative and more liberal values of Scouting echo the Greek ideas of citizens developing their *arete*, or virtuous life, through leisure and discipline. However, as Smith points out, there is a conflict between the idea of doing good which is central to *arete* and the notion of being correct which is embedded in the notions of duty. Smith claims the element of duty seems to be an addition of modern authoritarian and hierarchical times in which going to war and maybe dying for one's country were necessarily high values. These, he believes, could conflict with ideas of doing good with its implicit assertion that values would be derived from within the individual.

Smith adds a new theme to the pedagogy of informal education by recognising the associational aspects of Baden-Powell's and Seton's concepts. He understands association as a strong and recurring theme in informal education (Jeffs and Smith, 1999), an interpretation confirmed by Vanandruel, Amero, Stafseng and Tap (1996). For example, the landmark 1919 Report on Adult Education (Ministry of Reconstruction, 1919) looked to the educative power of social movements and voluntary associations. It saw the value of 'the imponderable influences which spring from association in study' and the significance of 'the informal educations which come from sharing in a common life'. Similarly, in 1960 the Albemarle Report famously declared that the primary aims of the youth service should be association, training and challenge (Ministry of Education, 1960, Smith, 2000).

However, Vanandruel *et al.* (1996), researching concepts of association in youth work across Europe in the early nineties found that, in the UK, 'association' had come to mean association for leisure and an opportunity to meet with friends, that is association within

the social domains of life. They also report that their research identified an interest across Europe amongst young people for more politically engaged ways of associating especially in relation to environmental issues. This suggests the possibility of an interesting reversal in which the moral purpose behind youth association is directed by young people rather than by policy makers or youth workers, an aspiration reflected in Young's (1999) vision of a values based youth work that respects and supports the development of emerging values within young people.

Baden-Powell is open to diverse interpretations. His concepts seem to some to be macho, imperialistic, sexist, authoritarian and militaristic. Cook's (1999) interpretation of him is as

... leading by example and rescuing 'working class' boys who 'loafed' on street corners and drifted towards 'bad citizenship'. He promoted the public school ideals of 'obedience, cleanliness, temperance and loyalty' by using tracking, trekking and camping, the modified forms of traditional upper class pursuits such as hunting and coursing, to redeem 'hooligans', street urchins and 'wastrels'.

(p. 160)

Yet he provides a framework that Smith (1997c) claims 'can in principle be self empowering, socially active, promoting of fellowship and experienced as transformative'.

The Woodcraft Folk were not formally constituted as a voluntary organisation until after the 1st World War in 1925 (Woodcraft Folk, 2008). It was established as a deliberate alternative to the Scout Movement and recognised Seton as the inspiration for its philosophical roots. Key differences with the Scout Movement were that it was open to males and females, operated by democratic principles including full participation by young people in all decision making, focussed on living in and with the environment and overtly encouraged the values of equality, peace, social justice and cooperation. It also claimed to be explicitly not nationalist or religious. Like the Scout Movement it now has a global presence and advocates empowerment for young people by which it means that it helps

‘young people to make decisions themselves and to take an active part in the world about them’ (Woodcraft Folk, 2008).

As an organisation it played a significant role in Eastern Europe during the communist rule. Neuman (2000) describes how many east European countries sustained their cultures by retreating to rural areas during the summer away from central communist control. He describes how the Woodcraft Folk were one organisation active in supporting this in Czechoslovakia giving what Smith (2002) describes as Seton’s idealistic social values a considerably more practical expression.

The Woodcraft Folk approach constructs nature (the woods in this case) as a space untrammelled by the social, political and religious divides of the time and where principles of equality, peace and justice can be lived out in practice between people and with nature. Nevertheless, the apparently idealistic and radical beliefs and practices of the organisation have found their way into the everyday worlds of members. Active citizenship was not confined to sustaining the cultures of overrun east European countries. The organisation claims that its members have been and are still politically active through environmental and peace movements as well locally and more informally in their communities (Woodcraft Folk, 2008). In addition the Woodcraft Folk is the British member of the international Falcon Movement, an umbrella organisation movement that focuses on work with and on behalf of young people. They claim that their political affiliation is with the international labour movement. Its work is widely associated with peace activism and issues of social justice for young people such as child labour and pornography (International Falcon Movement, 2008). Much as the Stoneleigh Group partners the Iona Community and Camas can claim to support its members as agents of social change, so can the Woodcraft Folk.

It is in the many and varied interpretations of the ideas and practices of Baden-Powell and Seton that future developments by voluntary organisations in education outdoors can be located. Some bear the marks of the imperialistic Baden-Powell or the indigenous Seton. Others appear to draw on the self-reliant Baden-Powell or the democratic Seton. Smith

claims they provide a rich source of possibility for both conservative and radical interpretation.

Smith has shown how the ideas of association, nature as teacher, and the simple life, have been introduced into the pedagogy of citizenship. Also from Smith's analysis, despite the patriarchal aspects of Scouting and the legacy that this offers, there exists the potential for young people to emerge into the new idea of youth as creators of themselves and actors in their social worlds.

If the Stoneleigh Project turns out to be a form of informal education then the retreats will sit within the mode of work that Jeffs and Smith describe as 'more formal encounters' (Jeffs and Smith, 1999). These are characterised by the authors as involving individuals and groups doing projects that are focussed on learning and that are likely to have a curriculum. The form of education that the retreats take will be discussed further in Chapter 10. However, the mentoring before and after the retreats may involve what they describe as 'being around' and 'being there' and so belong to the less formal end of the spectrum. The aim of the Stoneleigh Group to develop agents of social change will also have more in common with the internally derived values behind 'doing good' than being dutiful.

Hahn and the Transformative Effect of World War Two

According to Smith (1997b) a 'moral imperative' was also the central idea of the next influential figure in the development of English informal outdoor education. Kurt Hahn had been experimenting in Germany with experiential approaches to education in a private boys' school. This included outdoor challenges and service activities as well as physical fitness. Similar experiments were taking place at the same time in several liberally minded English independent schools but it is the enormous influence of Hahn that outdoor educators remember. It is also his influence that carried pre-war values, organisations, and institutions beyond the Second World War.

Escaping Germany during the rise of the Nazi party he continued his experiments as head teacher at Gordonstoun School in Scotland. His aim was to provide the elite with a moral backbone through the discipline and challenge of his programme. During the 1930s he extended his ideas to the rest of society, in particular the rural youth of Morayshire, through the Moray Badge Scheme, the forerunner of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme now popular throughout the world and embedded in the provision of many voluntary organisations.

Richards (1990) encapsulates Hahn's conception of education:

Its purpose was to develop a righteous man who is vigilant and an active citizen, who has a sense of duty to his fellow man and to God.

(p. 68)

Richards goes on to claim that Hahn's contribution to education was not in his purpose but in his methods that he believes verge on a philosophy. Active citizenship, Richards claims, lay at the heart of it all. Hahn, he states, 'believed that every child was born with innate "spiritual powers" as well as an innate faculty that enables him or her to make correct judgements about moral issues' (p. 69: original emphasis). This ability, Hahn claimed, was lost in adolescence because of a diseased society and the impulses of the adolescent. Whilst the former is redolent of a society still taking a collective responsibility for the situation young people find themselves in, the latter is reminiscent of Griffin's beliefs about the biological interpretation of youth locating the problem in the individual. It stands out as an optimistic statement in which young people are, for once, not causing the trouble though they are still thought of as in trouble. They are thought of as having the capacity for moral judgement but in need of the right values framework within which to make these judgements.

Hahn's perspective on education is reflected in the qualities he used to evaluate students in school reports. Richards lists these as 'public spirit, sense of justice, the faculty of precise evidence, the power to do things right in the face of dangers, imagination and the power of

organisation' (p. 69). This can be compared with Cook's (1999) list of qualities expected by the public schools using outdoor activities at around the same time. She identifies 'courage, loyalty, endurance, a sense of honour, self-denial, fair play, public spirit and obedience' (p. 158). The differences might be subtle but Richards appears to give Hahn a sense of a greater respect for the individual's autonomy than Cook appears to give to the other public schools. Despite the strong framework of values there is more a sense of 'doing good' than of 'being correct'.

Hahn had a specific set of social issues in mind that he thought education could correct. According to Richards (1990) Hahn understood the solution for the disease he thought that society was suffering from to be only possible through the education of the young. Hahn described this disease with a set of 'social declines'. They are summarised by Richards as:

Decline of fitness due to modern methods of locomotion.

Decline of initiative and enterprise due to the widespread disease of spectatoritis.

Decline of memory and imagination due to the confused restlessness of modern life.

Decline of skill and care due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship.

Decline of self-discipline due to the ever-present availability of stimulants and tranquilisers.

Decline of compassion due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted.

(p. 69)

Richards comments that, in his view, these six issues would not be out of place amongst those that were perceived to underpin the 'moral panics' of the 1980s. It would be easy to update this to what is sometimes called the 'noughties'. A 1960s Outward Bound School, as Richards points out, might have prided itself on its participants going home ten pounds heavier. The school of today might pride itself on the person being ten pounds lighter. However, the concern is the same concern for fitness as identified by Hahn.

Richards claims the solution to these six declines, as Hahn saw it, were present in the justifications for all of the programmes that have their origin with him. All these programmes are active today, which Richards believes validates their current relevance.

The phrase that is most often attributed to Hahn is the notion of ‘impelling young people into experience’. Richards quotes a letter from Hahn to a commentator on Hahnian approaches, Skidelsky, in which he expands his original statement from which this phrase stems:

You and I would agree that indoctrination is of the devil and that it is a crime to force anybody into opinions but I, unlike you, consider it culpable neglect not to guide and even plunge the young into experiences which are likely to present opportunities for self discovery. If you spare the young such experiences, in deference to their wishes, you stunt their natural growth of basic human qualities which they will need for their own happiness and for service to their fellow men.

(Richards, 1990, p. 73)

It is perhaps worth noting that Skidelsky is American and so is steeped in a culture for which the pursuit of happiness alone is a founding value. Additionally Skidelsky derives from a cultural meritocracy and not an aristocracy. It is also worth noting that Hahn’s fear of indoctrination was well founded. The liberal educational values that influenced him as a child in Germany and later in England were also at the root of the use of the outdoors and residential camps to indoctrinate the Hitler youth. This commitment to ‘impelling’ and its apparently subtle distinction from compelling is, in this context, startling.

Sir Alec Clegg, in the preface to the second edition of Hogan’s book on the history of Outward Bound (Hogan, 2002) comments that the early Outward Bound School wardens, far from understanding Hahn’s ideas as a mandate to ‘toughen up’ young men, rather compared their roles with the educational philosophy of ‘the Hadow Report on the Primary School, which thought of education in terms of activity and experience, and also that of the

Plowden Committee, whose conviction was that educationally “finding out is better than being told” (p. 5: original emphasis).

For Hahn however, the central philosophy of Outward Bound was not its pedagogy but the consequences of this approach. He understood Outward Bound essentially as a preparation for service to society. In 1960, in a speech reflecting on the work of Outward Bound, he commented that impelling was not compulsion or persuasion of the young but attraction (Hahn, 1960). ‘You are needed’ he felt rarely failed as a way to motivate learning. Hahn thought that Outward Bound did ‘not go deep enough - It is the beginning of a great promise – but this promise will not be fulfilled unless the follow-up problem is solved’ (p. 10). He thought that society’s role was to complete the promise by identifying relevant and valued tasks and making it plain to young people that they were needed in order to fulfil them.

The concern during the Depression for the moral fibre of men, and working class young men in particular, was heightened further by the possibility of war. Cook (1999) identifies that ‘fitness for war’ was still a major factor in the pre-war legislative acts that were intended to encourage the public and voluntary sectors to increase their provision for recreational, social, and physical training for the 14 to 20 age group. She describes how this provision was made a duty by the 1944 Education Act binding upon local education authorities through their schools and youth clubs including the voluntary sector. Whether Hahnian or public school in spirit, Cook identifies the influential figures that constructed these acts as public school in origin and set on perpetuating their ideas of a good system. However, in Cook’s accounts there does seem to be a diversity of views about whether what was perceived as a social elite should continue to be trained as the war time leadership or whether the public school approach should be applied to all. Cook implies that the poor results of the old and public school educated military leadership in the early years of the war discredited the upper classes to a degree but not the system by which their leadership qualities were supposedly developed. It seems, she thinks, that outdoor training was seen as the answer to their needs and not the cause of the problem.

This belief in the methods of outdoor training produced another Hahn legacy. The Aberdovey Sea School in Wales was first established in 1940, as a direct result of the government concerns for character building (Arnold-Brown, 1962; Hogan, 2002). Its purpose was to apply Hahn's ideas about developing moral fibre to the drown-proofing of merchant sailors. Too many were losing their lives it was thought through a lack of resilience. A largely outdoor programme was developed by seconded naval officers to toughen up sailors and prospective sailors. Cook notes that the documentation concerning this project is a rare example of girls being included on an equal footing with boys. She claims that both class and gender norms were breaking down in the circumstances of the war.

The Badge Scheme was also proposed as a structure for the uniformed youth services and schools to use as a preparation for military service. This was rejected, Cook believes, because the links with uniformed youth movements was a sensitive topic after the success of the Hitler Youth Movement in Germany.

As the war progressed, the pre-war public school influences of character building, the rescue of the working classes, and fitness for war were joined by other concerns. Cook (1999) reports concern for the overall health of young people, a desire for urban children to experience a better life in the country, a commitment to a health service that was not means tested, and the amelioration of social problems. Cook comments that, as the fortunes of war turned, so the Education Act was seen in a different light as a means to enable secondary education for all and outdoor education as a training for life with the aim of giving children a sense of well-being. The 'Camps Act' of 1939 (Board of Education, 1939) came to the forefront, legislating for the establishment of 50 camps, with the aims of providing 'an experience of living together and of widening ... horizons' (Cook, 1999).

The Second World War created a singular moment in English history at which there was a concerted desire for life to be 'better'. Cook (1999) describes how the advisory paper on The New Secondary Education (1947) attempted to set a very different agenda for outdoor education shifting the emphasis, she claims, from general character building to specific

social purposes such as preventing juvenile delinquency. Living in community, picking up Smith's theme of association, was recommended. Residential experiences, journeys and expeditions are all mentioned as means by which to combat delinquency.

In the mid 1950s these approaches, Cook claims, were subverted by a return to character building and leadership. This she suggests was under the influence of three men with upper class backgrounds; Hahn, again, Sir John Hunt who was the first director of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and Jack Longland who founded the first local education authority centre at Whitehall in Derbyshire. The idea of leadership development began to replace character building as the term to describe the process of educating the ideal moral person. This change reflects further shifts in emphasis from something that is done to the individual to something for which the individual takes responsibility though the shift may be as subtle as the distinction between 'compelling' and 'impelling'.

Smith (1997b) claims it is the idea, developed by Powell and Hahn, of society through its agents the teaching profession, providing challenges to the growing child in the form of demanding and rigorous physical programmes, that provides the heart of the British approach to outdoor education. It became a 'moral equivalent to war' rather than a preparation for it.

Cook also acknowledges that the agenda, under its new nametag of leadership, may be familiar but that the intent in many projects was quite different. The wartime shift in thinking from educating an elite to the new utopian optimism for a better future for all resurfaced. Men such as Hogan, the director of the first Outward Bound School during the war and now working in further education, set out to provide an outdoor education that broke down barriers of class. He maintained that 'children (who) were involved in new situations ... could be judged on their present merits rather than have their social background or past behaviour prejudice opinions of them' [Hogan quoted in Cook (1999, p. 171)].

Hahn's approach matured with the major cultural shifts that took place after the war. His elitist pre-war character building was first seen to be of value to all in pre-war Britain and later gained a new perspective of broadening the horizons of the young in the post war optimism for the future. This was reflected in the development of the Outward Bound (OB) approach after the war. The OB programme now so widely replicated really stems from the second school, Eskdale. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, an OB trustee and mountaineer, persuaded the Outward Bound board to establish the second school in the Lake District mountains and not by the sea (Arnold-Brown, 1962, Hogan, 2002). As a result the staff were a mixture of men with a naval background transferred from the Aberdovey Outward Bound Sea School and recruits from the world of mountaineering. Barton (1989) and Arnold- Brown (1962) both comment that managing the mix of the discipline of the navy and the anarchy of the mountaineers must have been one of the leadership tasks of the century. Tom Price, an early warden with a mountaineering background, nearly turned the job down believing the integration of the establishment ideas of education with the free spirit of adventure to be impossible (Hogan, 2002). He later described outdoor education as 'simple' adding 'that doesn't mean to say it's easy!' [Price quoted in Loynes (1990)].

Although Cook focuses on class as a significant factor in the evolution of outdoor education in the first half of the century it is perhaps a more complex story. The philanthropic efforts of late Victorians, as Smith points out, were not all patriarchal or militaristic. The romance and idealism of Seton's ideas persisted quietly as the Woodcraft Folk through all this time. Similarly the anarchic yet upper class mountaineers had a significant impact on post war provision alongside their more establishment and patriarchal peers (Barton, 1989). I would suggest that the idea of moulding the young was increasingly losing ground to the concept of the empowerment of young people to make their own moral and life choices.

What seems a unifying theme, perhaps with the exception of Seton, is that young people were seen, as Rogers (1997a) suggests they have always been, as unfit, idle, and at risk of moral decline and delinquency. What he believes remains disputed is whether this is an innate quality of being young, a failing in parenting and teaching, or the consequence of declines in society for which the young have an insufficient moral defence. During the

20th century, in Rogers' view, leisure time increasingly became the site where the morals of the young, or lack of them, were expressed or developed. The politics of whose morals were the right ones both within as well as between generations became, he claims, increasingly contested.

The class based, militaristic, and patriarchal backgrounds of some of the pre-war moral reformers led them to create rigorous, disciplined, and ordered programmes aimed at addressing 'problems' (as understood by sections of society) such as moral decline or fitness for war. Yet within this framework there emerged an increasing emphasis present in the thinking of all the influential people described, of the importance of the individual making his, and increasingly her, own meanings of the experiences these programmes provided. It was the transformative practices of people like Hogan and many other unrecorded youth leaders that constantly attempted to resolve this dilemma of the agency of the individual within the changing social structures of society and the emerging structures of the programmes in many and varied ways.

Post War Trends

The trend towards empowerment gained new support from post war influences of a different kind of philanthropist. This, in its turn led to new issues of power and purpose and a new individualism arose to threaten those who believed in the value of community and association (Jeffs and Smith, 2002).

Philanthropy financed the early post war additions to outdoor provision. For example, Dybeck (1996) describes how Francis Scott, a self-made man and wealthy from the growth of the insurance industry, bought an estate in the Lake District called Brathay Hall. Its remit was to provide courses to expand the horizons of young people at work in the urban areas. Brathay provides an influential example of the post-war voluntary youth organisation. The month-long programmes were heavily influenced by the Outward Bound concept but, from the beginning, the creative arts and drama were also essential elements, sited as it was in the romantic movement's heartland of the south Lakes. Scott is described by Dybeck as an entrepreneur and autocrat. He epitomised the new post war self;

independent, successful, and philanthropic with a special interest in young people; the key to the future.

Dybeck quotes Scott's aim as the 'opening (of) young people's minds to the possibilities of living adventurously in the world of physical activity as well as in the world of the spirit' (p. 23). This aspiration chimes with Hahn's 'spiritual powers' of self-realisation through moral equivalents to war. Indeed Scott acknowledges his debt to Outward Bound philosophies. However, Dybeck refers to an early warden who thought the only thing the two organisations had in common was the length of the programme; a month in those days. Scott's sense of agency is more liberal than Hahn's duty-bound version.

Everard (1993) describes Brathay's influence on the field of what is now called Development Training as 'the pedagogical leader of the pack'. Early rhetoric about Brathay quoted by Dybeck refers to releasing hidden potential, the valuing of communal life, a sense of personal significance, building self-confidence, fitness, and an aesthetic appreciation. These objectives stand out for their personal nature compared with the pre-war values quoted above with their strong duty-bound service ethic and social context. Nor do they contain the elements of 'doing good' in society. Rather they speak of 'being somebody'; another significant step towards a self-centred outdoor education. This is not a surprising shift coming from a self-made businessman. It was this 'new money' and business leaders that influenced a number of national projects in the latter half of the century.

However, it was not just new projects that fashioned post war outdoor education. Despite Cook's fears, the 1947 recommendation for journeys and expeditions was not lost, far from it. They are of special relevance here for several reasons. The post war growth in youth expeditions was not only largely voluntary in nature, it was led, in part, by the founder of the Stoneleigh Group; Dick Allcock. It was also the birth of one of the Stoneleigh Group members; Endeavour Training, a voluntary organisation directed by Allcock for many years (Allcock, 2002).

In many ways the youth expedition field epitomises the struggles and transformations that occurred post war. Pre-war examples of youth expeditions were public school, heroic and imperialistic remnants of the explorers and adventurers of the British Empire (MacFarlane, 2003). Ogilvie and Keighley (1987) comment that the influences on the practice of the late 1960s were: 'the traditional forms of various traditional sports ... introduced in the traditional way and followed in their traditional wilderness settings' (p. 23). Ogilvie and Keighley claim that activities and programmes that trace their roots back before the war were sometimes adopted without any great thought to the value of these forms of practice to their new post war context. This is a similar point to that which I made earlier in this chapter referring to a previous publication (Loynes, 2004a) concerning the influences of navigation.

Despite this the tradition of the youth expedition, an almost uniquely British idea, was transformed within the voluntary youth sector. Attempts were made to attach new meanings and values to old ways. These efforts were often problematic in that they could be steeped in the structures of outmoded practice (Allison, 2000). However, alongside those carrying the flag across the gulf of the Second World War, were new enterprises that were constructed differently and intentionally to reflect new values for new times.

John Hunt, steeped in those pre-war nationalistic mountaineering values, and fresh from climbing Everest for Great Britain in 1953, a success announced on the coronation day of Queen Elizabeth II, was another man passionate about young people as the future. He thought expeditions, and especially mountaineering ones, would be good for young people. He had the Hogan-like zeal for making such experiences available to all. Recognising that this might involve skills and knowledge he did not possess he was put in touch with a youth worker, Dick Allcock, used to working outdoors and who had similar ideas (Allcock, 2002; Cranfield, 2002). Both were working at national level on the promotion of the newly formed, Hahn-inspired, project of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Just as Price was struggling to combine adventure with education in Eskdale, Hunt and Allcock set out to combine expeditions with youth work in Greenland. Both were benefiting from the supposed anarchy of mountaineers.

Allcock (2002) was transforming a science- and adventure-based project with the youth worker's faith in young people. However, instead of simply making young people's development the central purpose, and science and adventure a vehicle, he set out to achieve good science, high adventure, and personal development. The young recruits are reported by Allcock to have come from all social backgrounds and were mixed sex. The second and all subsequent expeditions also included community service and young participants from the host country. Expeditions, already in part transformed from imperialist leftovers by scientists and adventurers, were now adapted for the widening of the cultural horizons of young people (Cranfield, 2002). Although imperialist tendencies still pervaded some of these projects many of those run by the voluntary youth sector took their definition from this early collaboration.

The New Individualism and Outdoor and Informal Education

The youth service, both public and voluntary, increasingly targeted what were variously called marginalised, delinquent, excluded, or disaffected young people post-16. This was partly due to a continuing reformist agenda amongst what were often Christian-based organisations. However, it was also led by the increasing amounts of funding available from the government and from charities for projects willing to work with these individuals. In the 1970s Intermediate Treatment programmes were devised to address delinquent and criminal behaviour amongst young people under 16 (Hunt, 1989). Run by Social Services and voluntary organisations, residential outdoor courses became popular with this sector. This was partly due to the influence of the, now, Lord Hunt (Cranfield, 2002) who campaigned for disadvantaged young people from his seat in the House of Lords. Increasingly informal education, often using the outdoors, was being tasked to help young people in the increasingly private task of finding a constructive identity, particularly work, in the adult world.

According to Davies (1999) the Youth Service diversified during this period in response to this diversification. In content terms sport, outdoor education, arts and global education were added to its activities whilst in process terms the themes of empowerment, participation, active citizenship and peer education emerged.

In the late 1970s and 1980s Margaret Thatcher completed the shift in the ‘moral panic’ of that time from delinquency to unemployment. The Youth Opportunities Programme and then the compulsory Youth Training Scheme provided programmes for young unemployed people and the latter included compulsory outdoor residential courses with the aim of personal and social development. Again, voluntary organisations were able to support the provision for these programmes (Hunt, 1989). Towards the end of the 80’s mainstream education had begun to catch up with the growing demand for post-16 provision. This, coupled with rising employment, led to a downturn in funding for these kinds of schemes.

Davies (1999) comments that Thatcherism, and the belief in the market as the solution to providing employment, led to the beginnings of a shift in the focus and role of youth work. He describes how, in the late 80’s youth work funding was increasingly targeted at the unemployed. This was followed by encouragement to work with some of the consequences of unemployment such as poverty, homelessness, offending and health. As a result Davies suggests that a universal right to youth work services was steadily replaced by a selective youth service with targets determined by the state and a purpose that changed from a liberal education to rescue.

A growing involvement by the state in the purposes and outcomes of youth work led to proposals being made in 1989 for a core curriculum (Davies, 1999). Early discussions focussed on attempts to identify priority groups and the skills, experiences and opportunities they needed. Davies claims that this continued the development of the idea of youth work as an education oriented and targeted service. Dissent between those in the youth service that were consulted on the curriculum and the civil servants managing the ‘curriculum debate’ led to a bold draft statement of purpose declaring that youth work was not only concerned with education but was also ‘committed to promoting equality of opportunity and participative and empowering forms of practice’ (p. 134).

Davies claims that ‘in applying these broad purposes, it also set the service the task of challenging oppressions such as racism and sexism and supporting young people to act on the political and other issues affecting their lives’ (p. 134). Davies indicates that this was

not popular with the government and further attempts to establish a core curriculum faded. However, he points out that the draft statement was widely used by youth organisations, local services and projects as a statement of youth work values. Ord (2007) comments that the outcome of this process “was an acceptance by youth workers of the task of articulating their work in terms of curriculum – ‘on their terms’” (p. 4, original emphasis). In Davies’ view, it, in effect, overrode the older values of a universal service concerned with ‘individual development and self-realisation’ (p. 136) and replaced them with ones oriented towards social, cultural and political matters thereby drawing youth work into the social sphere. This, in turn, underpinned demands for an accountable service targeted on specific groups and issues and tasked with achieving specific outcomes a view endorsed by Young (1999) who comments that in the late 90’s these targets were increasingly determined by government concerns.

These approaches to young people increasingly constructed the individual young person as the location for any action that would address these problems. As Williamson (1998) points out this trend set out to address social problems on behalf of the wider society rather than on behalf of the young people themselves. Continuing the trends noted above, Williamson (1997) cites criminality and employment along with homelessness as major social concerns leading to performance driven projects in the early 90s encroaching into the youth service from more powerful and established agencies.

Young people were being constructed as both the cause of and the answer to certain sets of social issues such as employment, health, training and criminality. Williamson (1997) claims that the trend was a ‘... recasting of public issues as private troubles - for individual enterprise and resolution. Social disadvantage and marginality (was) increasingly presented as pathological, but with no “medical” model or “social” attribution to cushion individuals from personal blame and responsibility’ (p. 190: original emphasis). The structural boundaries around the young person narrowed considerably as programmes were tasked to deliver good citizens in education or employment. National competency frameworks such as ‘key skills’ were developed in order to provide both a curriculum and a basis for auditing the outcomes of these programmes (Huskins, 1996). A curriculum for informal education in the youth service was emerging, driven by government policy makers and

advocated by those seeking to sustain funding streams for an increasingly under-funded youth service. It focussed on personal and social development, capability and competence (Hunt, 1989), exactly the concerns that Evans and Heinz (1995) concluded should be the focus of interventions for marginalised young people. The definition shifted from process to outcome as funders became increasingly interested in auditing the benefit gained from their investments. Outdoor and adventurous activities became a popular means by which to achieve these outcomes.

These changes in youth policy were not without their critics. Williamson (1997) states that ‘despite the rhetoric of choice and opportunity for young people and incessant political claims that “young people are our future, in whom we must invest”, the reality is much more to do with the subordination of young people to wider labour market and law and order imperatives’ (p. 190: original emphasis). Coleman remarks that ‘One of the most striking features of much ... youth policy is that it seems to be constructed more to meet the needs of adults than of young people’ (p. 25).

In 1996 I commented from an outdoor education perspective on the commodification of outdoor education (Loynes, 1996) and, in a later paper, discussed the pervading influence of algorithmic approaches to outdoor education provision aimed at delivering what were described as predetermined outcomes with pre-set programmes (Loynes, 2002b). Jeffs and Smith (1999) attacked the trends in informal education:

These trends provide informal educators with a number of challenges. Fostering democratic processes involves questioning common sense views. Ideas about the naturalness of markets, the right to private gain, and the inevitability of hierarchical structures are woven into daily life. In conversation informal educators have to keep asking, for example, what right do ‘managers have to manage,’ experts to decide what is best for others, and employers to control work, training and education? There is a lot of pressure on informal educators to ‘behave’ themselves, to be ‘responsible’. More and more funding for their work is short term and from unaccountable bodies

such as lottery boards and health trusts. There is pressure – seen and unseen – to tone down questioning and to quieten those they work with.

Many reading this will be deeply unhappy with this state of affairs.

(p. 38–39: original emphasis)

Some approaches maintained a pedagogic freedom but much of outdoor and informal education was entrained in the construction of the good citizen and worker and in addressing the social problems of those who deviated from these paths.

Surprisingly, according to Jeffs and Smith (2002), despite the growing concern for the breakdown in associative life, government policy re-branded ‘...youth work as a form of individualised case-management, and youth workers as specialists blessed with skills or personalities uniquely fitting them to control, monitor, distract, “develop” and oversee “troublesome” young people’ (p. 55: original emphasis). This, they believe, has reached a crisis for youth work in the statutory sector with the establishment of ‘Connexions’ and the young person as client, especially the problematic young person, typically a male. Young (1999) comments that the impact of these trends was twofold, encouraging many other workers to respond to the ‘needs’ of youth and for responses to be increasingly determined by external funding and the agendas of those funders. Jeffs and Smith (2002) describe this as a practice of surveillance and control, case management rather than education, and individualised rather than group ways of working that withdraws resources from the substantial majority of young people and is counter to the central tenets of youth work as Jeffs and Smith believe them to be. It could also have the effect of drawing interventions away from an informal educational approach to a more formal one.

Vanamndruel, Amerio, Stafseng and Tap (1996) confirm the view of Jeffs and Smith (2002) that traditional associative life in the UK is in decline and lacks government support commenting that ‘the result is a step backwards towards “charity-style” operations’ (p. 293, original emphasis). However, they also comment that, from the perspective of young

people associative life is still very active, informally through families and peer groups, and formally through leisure clubs.

Ord (2007) offers a rather different view suggesting that the traditional approach of the youth worker remained intact through the 90's and that the introduction of a 'curriculum' simply made explicit what was widely practiced before. He understands the practice of youth work remaining quite distinct from although overlapping with formal education.

Within outdoor education, an approach utilised by both formal education and youth work, Loynes (2002b) argues that the 'discipline of the naval vessel' was being re-asserted over 'the anarchic slopes of the mountain'. Loynes draws on Ringer's (2002) term 'algorithmic' to describe the sequential and linear forms of 'experiential' education that have arisen from this development breaking away from what many regarded as a delicate but highly constructive balance between informal person centred and formal agenda dominated approaches, perhaps the outdoor education equivalent of Williamson's (1998) tight rope mentioned above rather than Ord's (2007) concept of overlapping spheres. Ord refers to what I understand as the same issue within experiential learning as '*techne* – the analogy of learning as a production line' (p. 71, original emphasis). He puts the emergence of this approach down to the emphasis on 'product' within the youth work curriculum, a focus he understands as problematic highlighting the emphasis it places on training rather than education. He also comments that, whilst the emphasis on outcomes can be apparently constructively needs driven, it is not necessarily the needs of young people that are being met.

Williamson (1998) argues that, whilst it was important for youth work to hold on to its traditional democratic values, this was not necessarily mutually exclusive to a service that could tackle social issues on behalf of young people. The outdoor residential organised by a youth organisation, away from home and understood as an aspect of a young person's leisure time, could arguably offer a space in which to engage with adults who put young people first (Tucker, 2003) but who could also discuss problems and offer solutions. These messages were often packaged in the carefully constructed and interpreted outdoor

activities adapted from corporate outdoor training's team building and leadership training programmes (Dybeck, 1996, Hunt, 1989). Ord's useful distinction between process and product highlights the emphasis within outdoor learning on a youth work process understood as a student centred co-construction of meaning and knowledge within an informal approach to outdoor education. It is not understood as curriculum free, simply curriculum negotiable. This form of practice should be more appropriately called non-formal rather than informal. However, as explained in Chapter 1, this thesis is following the practice of the Stoneleigh Group (and many practitioners of 'informal' outdoor learning) in misusing the term 'informal' education in order to maintain some clarity for the reader.

These trends had an impact on the voluntary as well as the statutory sector. By the end of the 1990's outdoor education was again being promulgated as one of several strategies for providing a handrail post-16 (Brown and Humberstone, 2003). This new provision, initially piloted in 2000 as the Summer Activities Initiative and later called the Summer Activities Programme (Thom, 2003), put more government funding into outdoor education than ever before. Yet again, the voluntary sector, as part of consortia, was able to contribute to this provision. The idea behind funding being given to consortia was to encourage innovative approaches from the interaction of agencies that did not normally collaborate.

Within these schemes 'projects' such as outdoor residential experiences still worked through groups. However, the curriculum and leadership of the courses as described by Brown (2002) ('... ideally enabling young people to have some role or choice in the design ...' p. 27) or Kirby (2002) ('... the activities ... were used to try and teach people about themselves, and teach them about working with others ...' p. 36) takes this work even further towards the formal education end of Jeffs and Smith's (1999) formal/informal continuum. Despite the apparent shifts towards 'control, monitoring, distraction, 'development' and overseeing' feared by Jeffs and Smith, Festeu (2002) shows how informal education practice remained critical to success in these programmes as understood by the young people. However he claims, like Tucker (2003), that the informal

pedagogy valued by traditional youth work was hidden in the interstices between the activity programme, the curriculum and the overt outcomes that justified funding.

Davies (2005) broadens this concern. Commenting on the colonisation of youth work by other agencies such as offending teams, the Health Service, Social Services, the Careers Service and schools he wonders if

the scent of adaptable methods can ... be attractive, not least for those policy makers and managers with strong territorial instincts. When the chase is over, some of the most easily digestible parts of youth work may have survived. But again the question has to be asked: will these filleted extracts still be recognisable and effective as *youth work*?

(p. 5-6: original emphasis).

These comments allude to the interest of other agencies in the effectiveness of youth work as a strategy for achieving their goals as opposed to the goals of the youth service which, in Davies' view, should be defined in part by their person centred approach. Davies adds that, in his view, it is the targets that can be achieved by these means that are of interest to other agencies. Indeed, he suggests that these colonising activities are largely frustrated with the youth work process that seems to them, he suggests, to be never ending and staff intensive.

Throughout the 80's and 90's the longer standing voluntary youth organisations such as Endeavour Training were joined by an increasing number of new bodies. A number were inspired by ex-military personnel. For example the Prince's Trust, a Stoneleigh Group partner discussed in more detail in chapters 2 and 9, was started by Prince Charles after completing his military service in 1976 in order to address the needs of 'disadvantaged young people' (Prince's Trust, 2006). Fairbridge and Venture Scotland began as spin offs from the Drake Voyage (1978) in which a reconstruction of Drake's ship repeated his circumnavigation crewed by young people. The project was the idea of explorer Colonel

John Blashford-Snell who set up the Scientific Exploration Society and the voyage as one of its major projects. They describe how returning voyagers were determined and encouraged to set up projects that made available significant outdoor experiences for those unable to afford or imagine a berth on a round the world voyage (Scientific Exploration Society, 2008). Fairbridge, the largest descendent of these projects, aims to support 'NEETS' (not in education, employment or training) (Fairbridge, 2008). Weston Spirit, another Stoneleigh Group partner set up by Falklands war veteran Simon Weston and 2 friends in 1988, aims to help 'disadvantaged inner city youth' (Weston Spirit, 2006). Youth at Risk, breaking with the military trend, was established in 1992 by a lawyer in an attempt to reach 'disaffected repeat young offenders' (Youth at Risk, 2006).

In every case these voluntary organisations followed the trend commented on by Jeff and Smith (2002) and Young (1999) to respond to the needs of marginalised 'problem' youth by addressing personal development needs in order to help them back into education or on to employment. In other words it could be argued that, they have to some degree, been colonised, as Davies (2005) suggests, by other agencies with other agendas. Walther (2003) comments on the increasing recognition amongst policy makers of 'informal learning' as a major contributor to vocational training. In this context by 'informal learning' Walther means learning that occurs as a consequence of private and social life experience and including, in his view, 'non-formal learning' that he defines as more deliberate interventions often made by youth services. This suggests that the 'colonisation' is even more widespread.

This new wave of voluntary youth organisations are based in the communities of the young people that they support and, as their youth and social work expertise has developed, they have diversified their practices from outdoor activities and residential experiences with the use of a wide range of interventions including outreach work and mentoring. The focus of the work of these new voluntary youth organisations has also evolved as each project in each urban area has sought to address the particular unfunded or unsupported 'problem' groups of that place. In many cases local concerns and regional and national funding initiatives rather than young people themselves define the groups who receive resources through these organisations. In a few cases, such as a number of the Prince's Trust

initiatives, young people respond to opportunities for support for their needs and ideas. The Prince's Trust, Youth at Risk, Weston Spirit and Fairbridge place a significant weight on diagnosis and a planned trajectory to education and employment whilst the remaining partners in the Stoneleigh Group typically take a more person-centred approach.

The Ladder Project, a more recent (1997 – 2002) youth work intervention in Wales, developed a different concept for their activities that understood the area as the problem and young people as part of the solution. Like the Stoneleigh Group, they set out to work with young people to help them transform the fortunes of their neighbourhoods. This they describe as being achieved by working with marginalised young people on an individual basis in order to address their needs and help them back into education, training and employment (Dunmore and Lloyd-Jones, 2003). This work would, it was thought, help in the development of the region as unskilled young people became competent to take on professional jobs. The project set out to train one group of young people as outreach youth workers and then, through them, address the needs of other young people in the area. Over the life of the project they claim to have reached 1361 of the 'hardest to reach young adults'. Like the Stoneleigh Group, this project set out to reach 18 to 25 year olds. More than half of this group took part in activities and volunteering including outdoor activities though the role these activities took is unclear. Nearly half re-engaged with educational or training programmes and all nine of the young youth workers completed their training.

The last 20 years, then, have seen trends that have shifted the practices of informal education in youth work, including those within outdoor education, towards a more formal approach. The goals of this work have also narrowed from the broader post war aims of developing the individual. They now focus largely on the development of skills and attitudes leading to employability for those unsuccessful at school or in the job market or provide programmes of distraction or correction from socially deviant behaviours.

Conclusion

The authors cited above claim that the values and practices of informal education have their roots in the social reformers of late Victorian Britain. These reformers were, they

believe, motivated in various ways to tackle the perceived problem of young working class people. Concerns were believed to range from a moral panic about their values, concern for their working and home lives, and a concern for the fitness of young men who might be recruited into the military.

Analyses of this early practice suggest that from the start the approach taken was one in which young people were supported in the process of transforming their circumstances through formal education, improved work conditions, and informal education. It is claimed the latter is underpinned by the values of enhancing wellbeing, a belief in the importance of truth, democracy, fairness, and equality and respect for all persons. Practices that are thought to define these early approaches to informal education include the idea of mutual support through association and collective endeavour, activity that was chosen by the young person, and conversation with intention that transformed leisure into learning.

These authors believe that the early reformers had a clear position. They think they were acting on behalf of society to bring about cultural improvement. The authors claim the reformers were countering what was thought to be an emerging individualism from which civil society was seen as under threat. However, they claim that as well as differences between the various projects in what the moral concerns were and how they might be improved, there were also differences in how the relationship between the young person and society was understood. Some analyses suggest that the key difference of relevance to the later practice of informal education was the way in which some reformers understood the task as helping young people to do good whilst others sought to instil a sense of duty.

Analysis suggests that many of these values, beliefs and practices of the past have persisted into the modern versions of these Victorian voluntary organisations. Some of these traditions, it is suggested, have been transformed by changes in social and economic influences between the wars whilst others have not. In either case it is thought these changes in voluntary organisations have largely been undergone uncritically.

It is considered that after the Second World War further social and economic changes transformed the values and practices of informal education. Leisure it is claimed (Rogers, 1997a) a preferred site of moral development and the voluntary nature of informal education placed it within this aspect of social life. A post war vision to broaden horizons, it is thought (Glyptis, 1991) saw a shift away from doing good or being correct on behalf of others to one of realising potential on behalf of the self (Evans and Heinz, 1995). It would seem individualism was no longer understood as a threat. In response to these trends character building became leadership.

Later still in the 1980's, moral panics concerning young people resumed. This it is believed led to a narrowing of the informal education curriculum by an increasingly dominant State influence (Jeffs and Smith, 2002). Arguably this led to an emphasis on employability and correct behaviour. The critics of current approaches to youth work such as Jeffs (2002) and Young (1999) claim that the core values and practices of informal education have been challenged and a sense of surveillance has crept in.

During the 1980's outdoor education became one of several informal education strategies aimed at problematic youth. It is the only strategy mentioned specifically in European policy documents (as a solution to young male aggression) (IARD, 2001). In this document the problems of young people are listed as unemployment, violence, disability, gender, and race and it is claimed that they all lead to social exclusion. Chapter 2 shows that many of the Stoneleigh Group members are at the forefront of the provision of these strategies.

Voluntary youth organisations have adopted outdoor education as a form of informal education and as a means of addressing what are understood as the personal development and social problems of young people. These are defined differently at different points in history. At each point new organisations together with the values and activities they adopt, join those already in place. Most of these organisations have persisted to the present day; their values and approaches variously transformed for a new context or rooted in a past that may or may not have relevance. As the different institutions of adventure, young people, youth work, education, and social reform interact with each other in evolving cultural

contexts new curricula and pedagogic approaches emerge. The Stoneleigh Project provides a case study of one such programme that draws on these various roots through the different histories of the partner organisations.

A central theme of all of these institutions is the way in which power and control are understood and exercised. This operates across many dynamics; adult and young person, gender, race and class differences, the agency of individuals and the structures of society, professional and personal roles, and policy and practice. Outdoor education has been variously constructed as liberation, diversion and suppression. Young people are currently understood as exercising more agency in a longer and more complex transition to adulthood than ever before. Policy makers are expressing concern and making interventions in the ‘problem’ and ‘problems’ of young people as they have always done. In Chapters 10–13 the evidence collected from the participants in the Stoneleigh Project will be examined in the context of the cultural influences on these evolving shifts in the power relations and forms of knowledge within youth work.

Chapter 6:

Arriving at a Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the epistemological and ontological foundations on which the research was constructed. My aim is to provide an understanding of the forms of knowledge and belief that underpin this study. I explain my approach to interpreting the claims made by participants with regard to their knowledge and beliefs about their own experiences and about those of others. I examine how these claims interact within the Stoneleigh Project and beyond. I describe how this influenced my choice of an ethnography from a critical perspective as my research methodology.

Finding a Philosophical Position

Nicol (2003) states that it is essential for researchers working in the field of education to be clear about their philosophical position before embarking on their research designs. He argues that the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher is not always apparent and that this can lead to the choice of methodology being incongruent with the questions being asked. It can also make the interpretation of the data confusing for the writer and even more so for the reader.

This, Nicol believes, is especially important in the field of outdoor education as the ontological and epistemological positions of the ‘subjects’ of research are often incongruent. There is a rhetoric to practice gap also recognised by Barrett and Greenaway (1995) and Rickinson, Dillon, Teamey, Morris, Choi, Sanders and Benefield (2004). These authors are commenting on the number of claims made by outdoor education practitioners that are not substantiated or are actually refuted by research. I have already suggested in Chapter 3 that this may be, in part, because researchers may have been looking in the wrong place or in the wrong way.

A clear research position will illuminate the places where this research is looking and the ways that it goes about doing this. These epistemological and ontological foundations on which I have constructed my questions, chosen my method, and interpreted the evidence, will help the reader judge what this research is good for and what it is not.

Allison (2000) reviews the ontological and epistemological choices that he thinks are relevant to studies of outdoor education from a sociological perspective. He highlights four epistemological positions based on Guba and Lincoln (1994) in order to provide a language with which to discuss epistemological and ontological questions. These are positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivism. This he interprets as a continuum from knowing things to understanding experience. Whilst this continuum roughly describes a historical trend it also represents a diversification of approaches. All positions are actively pursued in social science research and researchers will claim each has relevance in different contexts or even to different questions in the same context.

Rickinson *et al.* (2004), in arguing for more interpretative and critical research, state that much of the academic writing in the outdoor education field has, until recently, been inductive. It built theory through thinking about the field rather than developing theory from empirical evidence. This often consists of theory thoughtfully adopted from other disciplines and professions. Some of it is specific to the field and based on reasoned debate. Rickinson *et al.* claim this has enhanced the gap between the rhetoric about the field and the actual practice in the field. They believe that important actions in the field are left undescribed and therefore unvalued whilst others are interpreted by models that are less than a good fit and come attached with meanings and values inappropriate to outdoor education practice.

Whilst Barrett and Greenaway (1995) were in favour of what they called empirical, qualitative, approaches being applied to research in outdoor education they were not supportive of case study approaches expressing concern that they could not readily be generalised. Rickinson *et al.* (2004) on the other hand, felt that, in order to learn more about how and why programmes work or not, more case studies would be of value. They

suggest that this approach would address a number of the concerns they appear to share with Barrett and Greenaway (1995) about previous work. Specifically they claim it could provide:

... clearer and more fine grained descriptions of participants; greater investigation into the complexity of impacts, including the differences within (as opposed to between) groups of students...

(p. 56).

However, they do recognise the dangers of ‘broad generalisations being made from small samples’ and ‘too much description without critical analysis’ (p. 56).

The founders of the Stoneleigh Project were aware of what they perceived as a research bias and as a reaction to it the Stoneleigh Group wanted a study that set out to build an understanding of its practice collaboratively from experience. In part the Stoneleigh Project was seen by some of its members as a critique of the theories built by inductive and other approaches and applied to other outdoor education projects.

However it was also hoped that the understanding constructed from the Stoneleigh Project might provide more than petite generalisations (Stake, 1995), that is generalisations relevant to the developments of the Stoneleigh Project and projects like it. The partners were inclined to suggest grand generalisations to the wider fields of youth work and outdoor education. They also intended to publish the work in the hope that readers would make naturalistic generalisations for themselves; that is generalisations perceived by the reader and not anticipated by the author. Whilst it might be possible to make ‘grand generalisations’ about the value of this approach to understanding outdoor education projects my intention was to develop an understanding of the Stoneleigh Project itself. The process of the Stoneleigh Group developing a narrative of the Stoneleigh Project in order to disseminate and influence the wider field of youth work became a part of the Stoneleigh Group’s work that I studied for the purposes of this research.

This call for research into the processes of outdoor education using alternative research methods suited to the questions being asked can be traced back to Warner (1984) and is picked up again by Humberstone (1987) and Ewert (1987). Humberstone, Brown and Richards (2003), introducing the report of what was arguably the first UK research conference for outdoor adventure, also endorse the value of new research approaches. They highlight the importance ‘... of interpretative hermeneutic research to developing greater understanding of the processes of learning where the outdoors and/or adventure are the major media for education.’ (p. 10).

For this thesis recent doctoral research in the field of outdoor education was reviewed and found similar views. Boyle (2002) in his methodology chapter for a thesis exploring children’s experiences of a school based outdoor education programme, quotes Henderson’s remark concerning recent research in Experiential Education.

Henderson ... observed that “the positivist paradigm has not always been as useful in helping to understand human behaviour”. This is especially the case when the goal of the research project is to discover, understand or communicate about people and their experiences during an intervention.

Later Greenaway (1995), who researched outdoor management development but in this instance is writing about research into outdoor experiential education generally, reports on the field’s stated need for process based research and on researchers’ comments on the limited value or inconclusive nature of their own outcome-based findings. Donnison (2000), researching outdoor management development (OMD), comments

Most researchers in the field of OMD appear to have adopted an objective, rather than subjective, stance towards the design of their studies of OMD. My impression is that this is driven by a need to answer the question ‘Does it work’ encouraged by a desire to ‘get at the truth’ and a need to provide hard, ‘objective’ facts.

Gray (1999) explored the different epistemological values of what she labelled quantitative and qualitative methods as approaches for increasing understanding of an outdoor education programme run for students from a secondary school. She is candid in describing her expectation that, coming from a sports science background, the quantitative data would be of most value. Her conclusion was that it was at best inconclusive and gave a shallow picture of events whereas the qualitative data was rich and informative. Greenaway (1995) also commented on the richness of his data and how, even using ongoing techniques to refine and narrow his line of inquiry, the possibilities kept running away with him. This he describes as both exciting and daunting. Donnison (2000), commenting on what he also terms qualitative approaches, suggests that

This approach is more likely to uncover the subjective experiences of participants involved in OMD and discover their perceptions of an OMD course and its effects. It is also more likely to focus on the meanings individuals attribute to their experiences as participants on an OMD course, and to assume that OMD has different effects, at different times, on different individuals.

Locating research into outdoor experiential education in the wider field of educational research Donnison adds:

This has parallels with the approach towards educational research introduced by Parlett and Hamilton (1972). They argued that the experimental methodologies adopted by the physical sciences were inappropriate to the study of human behaviour. Research designs which ‘incorporated a belief that students react to contrasting educational treatments as consistently as plants react to fertilisers’ were criticised (Marton, 1984). This was accompanied by the suggestion that the procedures used by social anthropologists, who observe and question people to build up a detailed understanding of their customs and beliefs, were more appropriate to research that seeks to understand educational situations from within.

The emphasis on objective approaches and the call for more interpretative studies applies not only to the experiential education field but also to education in general.

Hayllar (2000), researching OMD, comments that:

...they (quantitative studies) appear to lack the sensitivity to aid our understanding of the nature, quality or processes engaged within an experience. Their rigidity does not match the fluidity of personal experience. Given these limitations and others previously outlined, an emergent qualitative design was adopted for this inquiry.

(p. 127)

Like Hayllar, I was interested in developing my understanding of phenomena based on evidence and in an emergent design yet his use of the term 'qualitative' was an insufficient definition of my approach. However, Hayllar expands on his notion of 'qualitative design' by quoting Denzin and Lincoln (1998)

The multiple methodologies of qualitative research may be viewed as a bricolage, and the researcher as bricoleur...The bricoleur produces a bricolage, that is, a pieced together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation. 'The solution (bricolage) which is the result of the bricoleur's method is an emergent construction' (Weinstein and Weinstein, 1991) that takes new forms as different tools, methods, and techniques are added to the puzzle....The choice of which tools to use, which research practices to employ is not set in advance.

(p. 2)

Greenaway (1995) and Donnison (2000) use the term 'naturalistic' to describe their general research position. It soon became clear that naturalism was problematic. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) put it

Doubts have been raised about the capacity of ethnography to portray the social world in the way that naturalism claims it does. Equally, the commitment of the older kinds of ethnography to some sort of value neutrality has been questioned....

(p. 11)

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) describe how early ethnographers responded to the shift from a positivist to a subjective paradigm with an approach called naturalism. This replaced experiment and statistical analysis with a different approach also based on an originally scientific method that underpinned natural history. This was the observation of the world in its natural setting over a period of time. Hammersley and Atkinson point out that early practitioners of naturalism still believed, like positivists, that their observations were neutral and that ethnography has diversified considerably from these early qualitative approaches.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) define the epistemological position of constructivism as 'transactional/subjectivist; created findings. Findings are read as significant when individuals' accounts of their reality converge'.

This definition did not describe completely how I thought I understood the participants' knowledge of their experiences, conversations, and actions. I did understand peoples' accounts of their experiences as interpretations and not as realities. However, as well as being interested in the social construction of meaning, I also considered the personal interpretations of experiences by each individual participant as relevant. It was the relationship between experiential knowledge and socially constructed knowledge that was the focus of one of my questions. Although I appreciated that any interpretation takes place in the context of language and culture I thought that it would be helpful to consider accounts of experience arrived at individually as well as those negotiated by the individual with others. I wanted to pay attention to the distinction between the phenomenology of the experience and the hermeneutics. I thought this might be present in the accounts of the participants. I was also interested in the various ways knowledge about an event might be expressed and for what purposes it was expressed in a certain way. I thought it might be

possible to consider the ways in which power and control worked in the development of the participant's voice and narrative. Perhaps because of my interest in the process of experiential learning and the construction of meaning I was taking a more critical look at the nature and context of interpretation.

The challenge was to find a philosophical position that accepts the constructivist view of the way social knowledge is developed whilst at the same time accepting other viewpoints that would enable me to consider the personal knowledge of the participants in the research. This would allow me to work with the participants in this research in the construction of a rationale for the Stoneleigh Project. At the same time it would allow me to look critically at how experiential knowledge was facilitated and meaning developed as part of the pedagogic process. It would also be possible to set this in its wider context of informal education, youth and society.

The Contribution of Narrative

The plurality of views was a central ethical conviction of the facilitators as well. For them it was important that individual voices were respected and not lost in the collective understanding of events. Rather, the collective exploration of the meaning of experiences would help to give voice to individual interpretations and that respect for these individual accounts was part of the process of development being fostered by the Stoneleigh Group. As their intention was to use experiences and conversations to influence the personal construction of meaning and for this to affect individual's narratives and trajectories I considered how a narrative position might inform the study.

Reissman (1993) explores the representation of experience in narrative forms. She states

Investigators do not have access to another's experience. We deal with ambiguous representations of it ... It is not possible to be neutral and objective, to merely represent (as opposed to interpret) the world.

(p. 8)

For Reissman experience is interpreted at least five times in the research process. Her first stage of interpretation, 'The Representation of Experience', compared with my own thoughts about the first steps in an experiential learning process.

If we adopt the starting point of phenomenology and the lived world of immediate everyday experience, the world of this inhabited beach is “ ‘already there’ before reflection begins – as an inalienable presence” (Merleau-Ponty, 1989). Walking at dawn, I encounter it at a prelinguistic realm of experience – images, plays of colors and lights, noises, and fleeting sensations – in the stream of consciousness. I am one with the world and make no distinction at this point between my bodily perceptions and the objects I am conscious of that comprise the beach. Like all social actors, I experience this world from the ‘natural attitude’ taking it for granted, not thinking about and analysing it (Husserl, 1973; Schutz, 1967).

(p. 9)

This placed my own philosophical position with regard to the experiential aspects of the Stoneleigh Project close to that of phenomenology. Going on to describe the second stage, 'Attending to Experience', she continues

Then I attend to and make discrete certain features in the stream of consciousness – reflecting, remembering, recollecting them into observations..... By attending I make certain phenomena meaningful....

(p. 9)

Reissman's third stage, 'Telling about Experience', acknowledges the interpretation that results from describing an experience to others. 'By talking and listening, we produce a narrative together' (p. 11). She describes her views on the relationship between experience and narrative by quoting Merleau-Ponty (1989).

Our linguistic ability enables us to descend into the realm of our primary perceptual and emotional experience, to find there a reality susceptible to verbal understanding, and to bring forth a meaningful interpretation of this primary level of our existence.... By finding meaning in experience and then expressing this meaning in words, the speaker enables the community to think about experience and not just live it (Polkinghorne, 1988).

(p. 11)

Although this described the character of some of the interpretations I listened to, it felt idealistic to believe this was always the form a narrative took. It did not address concerns I was developing about other narratives, such as rhetorics, which had a purpose other than thinking about an experience. Reissman acknowledges that 'In telling about an experience, I am also creating a self – how I want to be known... My narrative is inevitably a self-representation.' (Reissman, 1993). However, Bernstein (1971) would argue that narratives are also an expression of how others want to know a person. Language also gives the participants and others the facility to provide meanings or attempt to define the experience of others in their terms. This approach also ignores the historical effects of family, school, work place, and community that also provide understandings of experiences and of selves. As one of the central concepts of the Stoneleigh Group was that the programme, and the retreat especially, provided opportunities to transcend these understandings it would be important to adopt an approach that would enable me to recognise these distinctions if they were present.

Manson (2002) addresses the question of different forms of narrative in her study. She accompanied the participant she was researching over a sustained period of time in her normal life at school. She describes how the girl she studied would move from one style of narrative to another. As examples she describes deciding when the subject was speaking for her, the researcher's, benefit, using the researcher's presence for her own benefit, or sometimes seeming to disregard her presence. She concluded that she could usefully discriminate between these styles. She also concluded that, rather than giving one a higher value of meaning over another, each had a value in its own context and should be considered within that context. Further, that her presence, whilst creating an unusual

dynamic in the girl's world, also created a different opportunity to collect data and that this data should not be discounted simply because it arose from interactions with the observer. What mattered was that Manson could ascribe to the data a certain kind of understanding that was attached to the context in which it was generated.

Reflexivity

Reissman's (1993) fourth and fifth stages are 'Transcribing', the process of the researcher describing what they have heard, and 'Reading', the interpretation of the reader of the research. Like Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) she acknowledges the lack of 'value neutrality' in the researcher and the reader.

Hammersley and Atkinson suggest that, for this to be possible with some rigour it requires a reflexive position on the part of the researcher. Reflexivity acknowledges that 'social researchers are part of the social world they study' and that they are aware of and make explicit 'the particular biography of the researcher', understand 'that the production of knowledge by researchers has consequences' and that 'the consequences of research (are not) neutral or necessarily desirable' (p. 16-17). With these understandings in place they claim it is possible to progress whilst accepting the essentially interpretative nature of ethnography.

An Ethnographic Approach

Brewer (2000) defines ethnography, or more accurately, 'little ethnography' (p. 10), by which he means 'field research' (p. 10), as

...the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also in the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally.

(p. 10)

In order to address the questions developed for this research, and to do so in such a way as would further the understanding of the experience, an approach that would involve me in participant observation of the Stoneleigh Group and its interactions with the wider community of youth and youth work was attractive. The ‘naturally occurring settings’ would be the developing, providing, evaluating, and disseminating of a youth work project. The ‘field’ could include the meetings, forums, conferences, work and volunteer settings, retreats, and everyday lives of all the participants. I could observe this ‘field’ as it interacted with others. I could participate as evaluator as well as holding a research role. I could influence the Stoneleigh Project whilst in these roles. I could take an interpretative approach to the evidence that I could gather in a ‘bricolage’ of methods both planned and spontaneous.

One aspect of an ethnographic inquiry into experiential learning that I noticed was what I took to be a similarity of approach to be found between an ethnographic approach to research and some approaches to personal development including the approach of the Stoneleigh Group. I imagined the task of the adults in the Stoneleigh Project as helping the young people to become inquirers into the meaning of their own experiences. The intentions claimed for outdoor experiential learning are to help young people build identity and social relations. In the Stoneleigh Project the intention was to do this in a way that fostered a critical awareness of themselves and the social worlds in which they lived. At the same time it was also the intention that the youth workers could be supported in developing a critical understanding of their practice. In the light of the concerns recounted above about a lack of congruence between the research questions being asked and the methods of asking them this apparent congruence could be understood as beneficial. Greenaway (1995) comments that he came to a similar view:

My subject, ‘development training’, and ‘soft research’ seemed to share the same paradigm. It seemed, for example, that many phrases in ‘The New Paradigm Research Manifesto’ (Reason and Rowan, 1981) could be readily applied to development training:

We know that people have the capacity for self-awareness and for autonomous self-directed action within their world, that they may develop the power to change their world. The whole thrust ... is to produce the kind of active knowing which will preserve and enhance this capacity and this power. Thus the knowing acquired ... is helpful to the flourishing of people and to the politics of self-determination.

We see human inquiry not only as a systematic coming-to-know process but also as learning through risk-taking in living...

... we seek knowledge which can be used in living, and regard knowledge separated from action as in need of special justification.

The extent of the connections between the philosophy and practice of development training and that of New Paradigm Research initially led me to believe that New Paradigm Research would automatically provide the most suitable methodology.

(p. 3)

I then considered approaches to conducting the research and evaluation that could build on this congruence.

Entering the Field Co-operatively and Critically

Reason (1994) worked closely with John Heron in developing the methodology he called co-operative inquiry. It is not surprising that the forms of knowledge he recognises as centrally important in this kind of research parallel the phases of Heron's (1999) model of manifold learning, a model of experiential learning based on relational principles. In this model Heron recognises four ways of working with knowledge as a learner. The first he calls 'experiential learning' and involves the sensual, non-conscious, embodied sense-making of an event. Next Heron claims the mind seeks to interpret the event in what he calls 'imaginal learning'. Third is 'conceptual learning' in which Heron believes language is used internally and externally to define the event's meaning. This is the first stage at

which a constructivist approach is relevant as the meaning of an event in the present moment is negotiated with past understandings held in mind and with the current emerging understandings held by others present. Lastly, Heron believes there is ‘applied learning’ in which action and intention are involved and which may also be an expression of a constructed outcome.

These four forms of knowledge Reason and Heron (1999) call an extended epistemology:

Co-operative inquiry involves at least four different kinds of ways of knowing. We call this an “extended epistemology”-*epistemology* meaning a theory of how you know, and *extended* because it reaches beyond the primarily theoretical knowledge of academia. Experiential knowing is through direct face-to-face encounter with person, place or thing; it is knowing through empathy and resonance, and is almost impossible to put into words. Presentational knowing emerges from experiential knowing, and provides the first form of expression by drawing on expressive forms of imagery through story, drawing, sculpture, movement, dance and so on. Propositional knowing “about” something, is knowing through ideas and theories, expressed in informative statements. Practical knowing is knowing “how to” do something and is expressed in a skill, knack or competence.

By using a co-operative inquiry approach for the evaluation work (also described in this thesis as a participative inquiry as this was the phrase adopted by the participants) I had established a way of working that was exploring knowledge forms in a way that was sensitive to my interests in personal and social knowledge and their interplay. At the same time the approach seeks to value all voices at the same time as exploring collective understandings. This suited my interest in exploring the different positions held by individuals and groups concerning their knowledge. It also worked well from an ethical standpoint enabling the voices of the co-researchers/participants to remain congruent and so supporting the pedagogic as well as the research purposes.

Co-operative inquiry was attractive as a method for data collection for several other reasons. It draws on the work of Heron (1992) and his psycho-spiritual model of the self; a model I came to view as congruent with the values of some of the participants, especially the facilitators, of the Stoneleigh Project. I thought this congruence might add to the weight of the data collected. Reason's approach recognises the engagement of the researcher in the subject of the research and allows for an overtly active participation in the inquiry. It encourages all the participants to become their own researchers into their experiences, an approach the participants in the Stoneleigh Project thought to be sympathetic with their approach to learning and suited to the kind of data they wished to collect. This approach also recognised that the outcome of the research should have value to the participants as well as the researchers, one criterion that Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) recommends as a measure of academic rigour for ethnographic inquiry. In addition it allowed for an involvement with the social consequences of the research as discussed above.

However, I found that it did have problems for some of the questions I wished to ask. It adopts what Reason (1994) calls an appreciative position. Once the researcher has interpreted, fed back, and confirmed the understanding of the data, it is accepted unconditionally as having the meaning the participants place upon their research findings. This would not allow for a critical position in relation to my interpretations of the data in a wider context. In order to develop my understanding of the Stoneleigh Group and how it is situated as a social phenomenon I found that I needed to do just that.

Criticality

Richards, Peel, Smith and Owen (2001), in their study of adventure therapy and eating disorders, discuss how they take a critical feminist position. They say

The basic aims of feminist research are to place the social construction of gender central to its agenda and to ensure that patterns of discrimination are challenged throughout all stages of research.

(p. 15)

The research process should not reproduce the oppression of women. Instead the empowerment of all women ... should become the focus of the research process. This requires the researcher to remain critical of the consequences of research upon women's lives. ... Research needs to ensure, therefore, that social change is facilitated ...

(p. 15–16)

Richards *et al.* were working directly with women with eating disorders and so a feminist position seemed to them to be entirely appropriate to their methodology. For my study I found the critical aspect of their approach of relevance to my methodology. Their approach made me aware that I needed to explore the consequences of the actions of my research on whatever and whoever lay at the centre of my study. However, I was unsure whether this exploration would necessarily conclude that my purpose should always be to empower the focus of my study through the research process in the sense of this feminist position. I needed a broader concept of a critical approach.

The Stoneleigh Group set out to support young people in their transition from youth to adult in the context of their social and working lives. They held an intention to encourage these young people to be agents of change in their own and other people's lives. A critical position would allow me to consider the social context in which the young people, the Stoneleigh Group partners, and the Stoneleigh Project were embedded. Issues of power and control in the development of the meaning of the experiences could be explored in a way that respected the meanings offered by the participants but interpreted them in a wider context. It would also allow me to respect understandings that participants felt were empowering for them whilst holding a critical view that they might actually be the opposite.

A Grounded Approach

The discipline of the consultancy put me in the field early in the life of the research. This was a great help. Up until that moment my thinking was rich in imagining and theorising about what might be found. Once in the field the context of the Stoneleigh Project took over and ideas and questions began to emerge from the ground. Glaser and Strauss (1967) first described this approach calling it grounded theory. They advocated jumping in to the field of inquiry without a theoretical approach already formed. They thought that, as the data suggested lines of inquiry and areas of concern, that theory could either be developed from this empirical source or identified from elsewhere, as in my case.

As outlined in Chapter 8 I utilise the theories made available by Bernstein (1996) and Joas (2000). These theoretical frameworks provide a structure with which to develop a critical reflection of the case study as an example of power and control working within an informal outdoor education project. This provided the means by which I could answer my questions about the actual rather than stated purposes of the Stoneleigh Group and its partners and consider the outcomes of the Stoneleigh Project for the young people and how they were achieved.

Adopting Critical, Interpretative, Hermeneutic and Ethnographic Approaches to the Case Study

Whilst other qualitative methodologies less demanding on resources and emphasising questionnaire and interview techniques would have identified some characteristics of the programme and certain details of the trajectories of the young people, the knowledge this would have provided would not have allowed the depth of analysis necessary to critique effectively the pedagogic practices or the trajectories of the young people in the context of larger social and cultural contexts. Nor would it have identified the pedagogic struggle within and beyond the Stoneleigh Group. An action research approach, whilst appealing for the potential practical benefits it could offer to the Stoneleigh Group and its partners, would have duplicated much of the work of the evaluative study and would not have enabled me to approach the more critical questions that concerned me. Likewise, a purely co-operative inquiry approach, whilst addressing my ethical concerns to represent the

voices of all participants in this research, would mean that the questions concerning power and knowledge could only be illuminated but not addressed analytically in a wider context.

I was interested in the politics of the construction of meaning and identity within the Stoneleigh Project and the construction of the pedagogic and curriculum practices of its organisers and partners. The advice of methodology specialists, commentators on outdoor education research, and post-graduate researchers was to adopt a methodology that was congruent with the questions I wanted to explore. Further, they all encouraged an inquiry that would seek to understand the events from the point of view of each individual participant and encouraged an interpretative approach to achieve this. I decided to operate as an active participant observer throughout the life of the Stoneleigh Project. I was fortunate in that such an ethnographic approach sat well with the organisers of the Stoneleigh Project and would also allow me to evaluate it for them as well as conduct my own research.

I decided to combine a co-operative inquiry methodology to enhance the congruence between the research approach and the educational process as well as to optimise the potential for gathering evidence from as many people and events as possible. I was able to combine this, for the purposes of this research, with a critical approach to the pedagogic processes and curriculum content. This enabled me to explore the issues of power and control within the wider context of the lives of the young people and the work of the voluntary organisations.

In the development of the methodology of my study my research position has emerged. I have moved into an ethnographic research paradigm in order to explore the areas of interest as they have developed. The study of the social world on which I have focussed is well suited to a constructivist ontology and epistemology that understands each step in the making of meaning as an interpretation and each different meaning that emerges to be of value. This has worked best as it has been applied to the co-operative inquiries of the case study. The implications of this field data to the wider questions I have concerning outdoor education and youth work have benefited from a critical stance. As a consequence of a

collaborative relationship with the case studies and a critical stance in relation to the wider applications to outdoor education and youth work my engagement has been beyond description and interpretation and has entered the realm of action and advocacy.

Chapter 7:

A Review of the Methods of Inquiry

Introduction

This chapter describes the organisation and conduct of the research over the five years of the study from 2000 to 2004. I have outlined in the previous chapter how I arrived at a critical hermeneutic approach to inquiry. I also indicated how the methods I used to collect and interpret data were a 'bricolage' of techniques suited to the situations and questions at any one time. This chapter begins by outlining the ways in which the research into the Stoneleigh Project was structured to help the reader understand the diversity of contexts in which data was collected. I have organised the discussion of the methods used into three focus areas. The first focus concerns the methods developed to support the research undertaken into the educational approach of the Stoneleigh Project. The second focus discusses the collection of the data concerning the influence of the Stoneleigh Project on life stories of the young people. The third focus considers the approaches used to study the politics involved in the Stoneleigh Group and the advocacy work in the wider youth work field.

The ways in which this research was of benefit to the stakeholders involved within it is also discussed.

A Structure for the Inquiry

The Stoneleigh Group ran six programmes involving sixty-five young people and ninety-five other participants. Table 3 below repeats the calendar of the Stoneleigh Group's activities from Table 1 in Chapter 2 with the addition of the key research activities undertaken to collect evidence for this thesis.

Table 3: Research Calendar

Date	Event	Research Activity
Late 2009	Rank Foundation hold a 'Gappers' retreat.	Interviews with Colin of the Rank Foundation.
May 2000	The Stoneleigh Group is formed.	
Sept. 2000	The first group of participants are invited to the first retreat at Camas, Isle of Mull as a pilot.	Data collected (participative inquiry, participant observation and interviews) for an evaluative study of Camas. Invited to evaluate Stoneleigh Project at the same time.
Dec. 2000	The first Camas follow up weekend, Silesian Sisters, Cumbria.	Frampton collects data as participant observer, focus group and by interview (Frampton, 2001).
2001	Major funding secures the first phase of the project.	Evaluation project secured. I ask to use the data and extend the data collection for this research. Research questions formulated and ethical framework approved by Stoneleigh Group.
2001	The first Stoneleigh Group forum in Coventry.	Data collection (participant observation) begins at Forum, in partner organisations and in management team. Focus on pedagogy of the retreats.
May 2001	The second group of participants go to Camas.	Co-operative inquiry begins.
Sept. 2001	The second Camas follow weekend, Global Retreat Centre, Oxford.	Co-operative inquiry continues. Focus groups begin.
Sept. 2001	The third group of participants go to Camas.	Co-operative inquiry continues.
Dec. 2001	The third Camas follow up weekend,	Co-operative inquiry continues. Focus groups continue.
Feb. 2002	The First round of evaluation is completed and the first conference is held at Stoneleigh.	First report on evaluative study given. Interviews with management team, forum members and mentors. Telephone interviews with all participants to date. Secondary sources collected.
March 2002	A second round of funding launches the second phase of the project.	Research focus shifts to the individual case studies.
April 2002	Paper given to EOE Conference at Brathay Hall, Cumbria.	Bennett, Loynes, Redshaw and Rigler (2004)
July 2002	Paper given at ESRC Young People' conference, Keele University.	
Sept.	The third and last group of	Co-operative inquiry continues. Interviews

2002	participants go to Camas.	with case studies begin.
Feb. 2003	The second Stoneleigh Group Forum at Stoneleigh.	Focus group with Stoneleigh Group partners and other youth organisations.
April 2003	A training camp is held at Cae Mabon, Gwynedd.	Co-operative inquiry continues. Interviews with case studies continue.
Oct. 2003	A group of participants go to Gillerthwaite, Cumbria.	Co-operative inquiry continues. Interviews with case studies continue.
Dec. 2003	Gillerthwaite follow up weekend at Gillerthwaite.	Co-operative inquiry continues. Interviews with case studies continue.
2004	A group of participants go to Cae Mabon.	Co-operative inquiry continues. Interviews with case studies continue.
May 2004	The second phase of evaluation is complete, a report produced and the second conference is held at The Global Retreat Centre in Oxford.	Final evaluation report published. (Loynes, 2004). Focus groups with young participants. Young people present the findings of the co-operative inquiry. Secondary sources collected.
June 2004 – autumn 2005	Advocacy work begins.	Interviews with case studies continue. Interviews conducted with Stoneleigh Group partners and advocates. Secondary sources collected.

The first phase of the Stoneleigh Group's activities took place in 2000 with one cohort attending Camas for the first retreat. This research study had not been conceived at this point. However, I did attend the retreat as a participant observer collecting data for a study of the work of Camas. Some data from this retreat and some of the interview material collected from the Camas community at that time has been used for the purposes of this research with the permission of the individuals and of the Camas management group. This data has some limitations as the observations and notes made and the questions asked were related to the needs of the evaluation of Camas, a different if related set of questions to those being asked of the Stoneleigh Project. The overlap was that Camas had also asked me to articulate their philosophy and pedagogic practices for them. Nevertheless, this data has been used with caution. Any data referring to other groups attending Camas or collected from community members that were not present after the research had started has been excluded from this work.

Prior to the first retreat, I had also interviewed Colin, the director of the Rank Foundation, in relation to the development of the first Stoneleigh Group programme at his request. This data has also been included in this research with his permission. In my view, this data,

whilst not collected during the research for this study, was directly concerned with the Stoneleigh Project. Whilst I may have raised different lines of inquiry during the conversation if I had been interviewing Colin in the context of this research, the data gathered does relate directly to this study and so has been treated with some confidence.

The success of the first programme led the Stoneleigh Group to fund raise for a further two programmes to be provided in 2001. This included funding for the evaluation role I was asked to undertake. At this point, I raised the possibility that I would like to draw on the data from the evaluation study, and collect additional evidence, to conduct my own research into the pedagogic processes and curriculum content of the Stoneleigh Project as a case study of what the Stoneleigh Group referred to as ‘informal education outdoors for young people’. The Stoneleigh Group agreed to this subject to an ongoing discussion about the nature and focus of my research questions. Additionally, they asked that I agree to work to any ethical guidelines they might wish to add to those already binding on the research or adopted by me.

The Stoneleigh Group management team undertook to supervise the collection of the evidence for this research study on behalf of the Stoneleigh Group. All 4 research questions were discussed with this team and were accepted. The distinction between a co-operative inquiry based on a participative approach and a critical analysis were explained and discussed. In practice the management team felt that the evaluative study benefited from the additional research time and from the additional data collected in order to address the research questions. The participants who were invited to participate in the extended study introduced by the research project also reported that they felt they had benefited from the extended and additional involvement with the research work. No additional ethical guidelines were requested.

My initial research questions, described in Chapter 1, were concerned with the educational approach of the Stoneleigh Project and, especially, the retreat component. My focus during this first phase of the research was on an ethnographic inquiry of the Stoneleigh Project. The methods used are considered below as 'focus 1' of the study.

During the latter stages of phase 2 of the Stoneleigh Project the Stoneleigh Group received a third round of funding which supported a further 3 programmes with one more Camas based retreat and the piloting of 2 retreats at new venues in England and Wales. This also included funding to extend the evaluative work. This gave me an opportunity to extend the research study by continuing the ethnographic inquiry concerning the Stoneleigh Project. During this phase I also paid attention to the life stories of the young people after their programmes were completed. The methods used in this aspect of the research are discussed below as 'focus 2'. As a result I was able to extend the data available about the programme itself including, most usefully, the development of the retreats at other venues. At the same time I was able to explore the impact of the programme on a larger group of young people and, for young people from phase 2 of the Stoneleigh Group's activities, over a longer period of time. In 16 cases I was able to collect data from young people over 4 years.

During this phase of the Stoneleigh Project I introduced my fourth research question. I had become interested in analysing the data from a critical perspective in order to consider the claims of the Stoneleigh Group in an ideological context. The purpose of this question was to explore from a critical sociological perspective the claims made by the participants for empowerment and personal and social transformation. The Stoneleigh Group also made ideological claims for the programme and so I also applied this question to a critical analysis of their advocacy work. 'Focus 3' discusses the methods used to obtain data concerning this work.

Focus 1: An Ethnography of the Stoneleigh Project Programme

The first focus of this research was to address the questions concerning power and knowledge within the Stoneleigh Project programme. For the reasons discussed in Chapter 6 I decided to use an ethnographic approach for collecting the evidence from the Stoneleigh Project. A number of issues concerning ethnographic work were decided for me by the context of the Stoneleigh Project and my existing consultancy relationship with it. Silverman (2000) claims that one decision it is necessary to consider is whether to enter the field covertly or overtly. As I was already overtly in the field as an evaluator it would have been difficult to operate covertly for the purposes of this research. It would have betrayed my standing agreement with the Stoneleigh Group for an open approach to the evaluative

work making it harder to build trust and to have access to the field as fully as possible. In practice this made no difference, as, for ethical reasons and for methodological reasons, I would have chosen to research the programme overtly in any case. From the perspective of the participants they did not distinguish between my evaluator and researcher roles. The research task made no apparent difference. Nevertheless, I sought written consent for this research from all the participants the first time that I encountered them on a programme.

Another key decision that was already decided through my role in the field as an evaluator was to enter the field first before developing a theoretical framework with which to analyse the data or before forming questions that were too focussed. I wanted to respond to Rickinson *et al's* (2004) challenge that too much research has been done in outdoor education that approaches the field with a well-defined lens with which to examine it. Like them, I wanted to see what I might discover if I collected evidence around more general questions. This was also the aspiration of the Stoneleigh Group. Although the members of the Group had clear goals and ideas about a way to support them, as a pilot programme they also held the goal of understanding how the programme worked and what it actually achieved.

This grounded approach, first described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and discussed in Chapter 6, meant that my intention was to observe as carefully as possible what happened and what the participants made of it. This had two implications for method. The first is that it was not easy to plan for a particular approach. Glaser and Strauss argue that it is more helpful to be open to opportunities as they arise or develop a technique to respond to a particular task at the time. The second is that theoretical concepts emerge later. These may emerge from the evidence or, as in my case, have already been developed elsewhere and are applied as a useful tool with which to explore the data for the questions I had raised.

Access to the field was readily available as my role as evaluator gave me the opportunity to spend as much time with the participants as I could manage. This involved being in several different settings including being with the participants on the programmes, visiting the

young people and the mentors in their voluntary organisations, attending the programme design and management team meetings and attending Stoneleigh Group events.

The co-operative inquiry approach to the evaluative work had already established ground rules for access to information about the participants and their experiences that also worked well for this research. Whilst many personal issues were discussed between individuals whilst they were together on the programme, only information that was presented to the participants as part of the co-operative inquiry was available to me for research purposes. Whilst this meant that, during this first phase of the research, I did not have access to some elements of the life histories of the young people in particular, I could be confident that the evidence I did gather was available to this research with full consent. In some cases the data gathered in this way was not as authentic as it might have been if I had been present at the time. Stories were offered to the inquiry groups that I had not observed. However, I could not be present for more than a fraction of the interactions that took place. This meant that some of the data refers to events that I also observed and some is only reported. I have been careful to consider this in the way I handle the data for analysis. No data has been presented, whether I observed it or not, that was not also made available to the co-operative inquiry.

In practice, my experience was that little was intentionally withheld from the co-operative inquiry groups. The loss was more to do with incidents I would have found informative but that were not shared because the participants did not perceive them this way. In some cases events remained unreported even when I attempted to prompt the group. This issue is a matter of some concern to any research that is attempting to study a group of people in an intensive situation. My approach has been, as Silverman (2000) argues, to make the most of the partial data that I have. In itself this was a considerable body of material. The problem was also mitigated, I suggest, by the active involvement of the participants in the research via the co-operative inquiry, the length of time many participants had to consider what might be of interest to the research and the number of participants from several programmes from who I was able to gather data. All of these factors tended to help with a more rather than a less complete picture both in terms of what happened that was thought to be significant and the various ways in which that was understood.

At this stage I understood the data I was collecting, as discussed in Chapter 6, as interpretations of experience. Both individuals and groups of participants were making meaning of their experiences and constructing narratives that combined their emerging identities with the events around them. Reason and Heron (1999) argue for an appreciative approach to this data that respects the voice of the participant. In their view, as well as encouraging and representing the views of the participants, it often involves the researcher in giving voice to implicit or unarticulated stories that the participants might not have found the words for or thought of as of value in the study. This became a popular aspect of the early stage in each programme leading to the participants seeking stories more actively that highlighted things they wanted to report. It was this activity that the Stoneleigh Group facilitators thought was also constructive for their pedagogic purposes.

Silverman (2000) proposes that, at this stage, the researcher's approach should, as far as possible, be non-judgmental though aware of the interpretation that is applied by his or her perspective. He suggests that, to ensure that the voices of the participants are interpreted as authentically as possible, that the researcher seeks feedback on his or her interpretations from the participants. This approach is structured in to the co-operative inquiry approach of Reason. Each participant is understood as a researcher of his or her own experience. In this situation feedback is sought from other participants as well as the formal 'researcher'. The researcher's voice is acknowledged in the process as one of equal weight but with a different perspective to offer. I made full use of this approach by reflecting back to the participants my interpretations. They were able to read my notes, discuss my ideas and critique presentations and reports.

However, whilst the voices of the participants were the final arbiters of the interpretation of events in the evaluative study, I retained and exercised the right to maintain my interpretations when they were different from those of the participants in the research study. This meant that any evidence used in this thesis has been explored fully by the participants and, if I have offered a different understanding, I would argue that this has been tested rigorously before I decided to use my interpretation. I sought permission for this approach in the discussions with the participants about the research study and it was explicit in the consent form. In practice, where my voice differed was usually in situations

where the questions for this research study raised ideas that the participants did not find of interest rather than that they disagreed with them.

The data from the ethnographic inquiry is, in my view, valid for research purposes. This is for several reasons. The co-operative inquiry method ensures that, wherever possible, the evidence presented is based on the views of the participants. Additionally, where a collective interpretation does not arise, it represents diverse views and it respects the uniqueness of the impact of the experiences on each individual. These interpretations undergo several levels of checking. First, they are confirmed in the discussions of the inquiry group. In many cases these interpretations were presented by the group as an account of their experiences to other participants or members of the Stoneleigh Group. This gave me another opportunity to hear their stories as they wished them to be told. Some participants were also present at my presentations and were encouraged to give feedback on the accuracy of these. This opportunity was regularly exercised.

In addition, themes illustrated in this thesis by particular accounts have consistency as they have been chosen to represent interpretations that were repeated in more than one person's narrative and, often, from people who attended different retreats.

A Co-operative Inquiry

The starting point for collecting data for this research was the co-operative inquiry that was already underway as part of the evaluation of the programme. In the early stages of the research study I did not add any other data collection methods to the process. This was partly for simplicity and partly to find out what the data from this inquiry could provide before adding any other layers to the research study.

The decision to adopt a co-operative inquiry approach to the evaluation was influenced by several factors. In the first phase of the evaluation the project designers and I became a design team. It was this group that concluded that the approach to evaluation and the approach to development training with which we were comfortable were not only based on similar values but were also aimed at achieving similar outcomes.

- The Stoneleigh Group had expressed an interest in data in which the voices of participants were heard and which helped with an understanding of the work.
- The funding would not allow one evaluator to attend all Stoneleigh Group events especially the retreats.
- A co-operative approach was expected to help inform each person more fully about his or her role in the project, that is it was understood as staff development.
- The congruence between the purpose of the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project and the purpose of the retreats as opportunities for spiritual inquiry meant that the evaluation was understood as supporting the pedagogic practice of the facilitators. The co-operative approach was, therefore, also understood as enhancing personal development that was congruent with the aims of the project.
- The ethics of co-operative inquiry were thought to be congruent with the youth work ethics of the organisations involved in the Stoneleigh Group.

The design team set out to integrate the delivery and evaluation. This involved developing an approach to inquiry that, as far as possible embedded the questions we were exploring into the pedagogic practice of the retreat. Implementing the evaluation became the responsibility of the facilitators of each retreat. These four people were drawn from the design team. Each retreat was facilitated by at least two out of this team. Each group of people on a retreat, consisting of host volunteers, mentors, participants and facilitators, were treated as a separate co-operative inquiry 'cell'. This ensured that the confidentiality of each retreat group was contained within the group. It also ensured that the group sustained the collective narrative of the experience.

In one case, the first retreat programme, Frampton, a student from my department, collected data from the participants during their follow up programme. As part of my evaluative work for Camas I had observed this retreat. Before the follow up weekend the Stoneleigh Group received news of funding for their next phase and I was invited to evaluate the continuation of the Stoneleigh Project. The student, who had an interest in retreat based approaches using the outdoors for a dissertation (Frampton, 2001), was asked to collect data from this follow up weekend as a way of helping the Stoneleigh Group develop the next phase of its programme. The questions asked by the student were developed with me so that they were congruent with the aims of the evaluative study. A co-operative inquiry approach was used and consent gained in the same way as for the rest of the Stoneleigh Project. The data from this set of participants has therefore been included in the data for this research study.

Participant observation

Participant observation was what each 'researcher/participant' in the co-operative inquiry was practising. In this situation the participants were, as Simpson and Tuson (1995) put it, 'looking systematically for specific categories of events' (p. 17) that related to the purposes of the retreat and the evaluation of the retreat. In this context, however, I am referring to my participant observation. Initially, this contributed to the co-operative inquiry. Later in the process, as the themes involved in the evaluative and research studies diverged, an increasing amount of my observations were recorded outside of the co-operative process. In this situation my observations were more in keeping with what Simpson and Tuson describe as 'looking at a social situation and generating categories to explain complex interactions' (p. 17). The nature of the retreats was such that wide ranges of personal and social situations were available for observation. Apart from the actions and conversations of the retreat experience there were numerous pedagogic devices used to support the participants express to themselves and to each other the meaning of the experiences to them. By living as a member of the community I was able to sample all of these situations. Inevitably, however, I would be focussed on certain participants or have to make a choice about which participant or group to be with.

The participants had a wide range of abilities and motivation towards written forms of communication. Some were semi-literate. Others were avid diary writers. The same could be said of aural forms with vocal and quiet, and articulate and timid participants. This could present problems for observation as it leads to the possibility that some participants would be more 'visible' than others. This issue was of concern to the facilitators for pedagogic rather than research purposes and so was substantially addressed on an ongoing and often individual basis during each retreat. It was decided to use a wide range of techniques in order to provide a range of expressive forms of communication. These were adapted as the retreats progressed. This had the added advantage of providing methods that allowed individuals to explore and express an individual narrative as well as supporting the group in constructing collective narratives. Some techniques were pre-determined by the design team and proposed to each retreat group. These included one to one discussions with mentors before during and after the retreat, twice-daily whole group discussions, whole group discussions during follow up weekends, and creative art and symbolic ritual designed and presented by individuals and sub-groups. In addition individuals were invited to explore their experiences of the retreat in any other form they wished. It was then their choices as to whether to keep this to themselves, share this with the whole cell, or just their mentors or a facilitator.

This made it easy to integrate data collection with pedagogic practices. By ensuring that data collection documented all activities of this kind, data collection of the key events at which the meaning of experiences was expressed was comprehensive.

Whole and sub-group activities were conceived, designed and conducted in a mutual way, the facilitators attempting to give equal weight to all voices. In this respect the ethics of the facilitators and of this research were congruent. Participation in any aspect of the inquiry was always voluntary.

In the main I recorded data in what Simpson and Tuson (1995) call descriptive and narrative forms (p. 45-51). I would first create descriptive account of an event and then, on the opposite page, write a narrative account with my interpretation as close to the time as I

could manage. This would typically be the evening of the day of the events at the latest. Both of these sets of field notes were made available to the participants for comment and I drew on these notes for my contributions to the co-operative inquiry groups.

This gives the impression of a well-planned process. In the main it was. However, part of that plan recognised that many activities, some of them spontaneously generated on the retreats, could become a source of evidence in an unplanned way. The mentors, host community members and facilitators enriched the inquiry by acting as participant observers and feeding back their observations to whole or sub-groups or individuals. The facilitators were the only people expected to keep notes of this process as it unfolded. All these additional accounts were then available to this research through the co-operative inquiry groups.

The First Retreat

As explained in Chapter 5 the data collection began before the evaluation of this project was conceived. As a result of the evaluation of Camas I had interview and observation data about the beliefs and practices of Camas from the Camas Community, Iona Community members, the Camas committee and several visiting groups. I also had secondary evidence from the reports and minutes of meetings concerning Camas and its development. All this evidence has been used in the interpretation of Camas' pedagogic practices except for that drawn from visiting groups other than the Stoneleigh Group.

The first Stoneleigh Group retreat took place at Camas on the Isle of Mull in 2000. I was present as a participant observer in order to evaluate the work of Camas. This involved attending the retreat and assuming a role in the community life. Evidence for the evaluation came from observations of formal and informal events and conversations with each person present. These were recorded after the event in notebooks. I subsequently annotated these with my interpretations. My role as a researcher was known to everyone. All the participants had access to my notes and could propose additions and changes. Everyone gave their consent to my role and to the use of my notes in the evaluation and,

later, the research study. In addition I collected secondary sources of evidence from Camas and the Stoneleigh Group.

I was also given permission to interview the participants in this group as part of the Camas evaluation, a task I undertook with the support of Frampton, an undergraduate student. My work for Camas included developing a rationale for their pedagogic practice as well as identifying the outcomes and benefits of participation (Loynes, 2001).

I was invited to evaluate the Stoneleigh Project before interviews had been conducted. Camas gave their permission for me to use the data collected on their behalf during the retreat to initiate the work with the Stoneleigh Group. Frampton and I were able to adjust our approach to the interviews in order to gain an understanding of the Stoneleigh Project as well as of Camas. Frampton interviewed the participants whilst I interviewed the mentors and facilitators. We argued that Frampton would get better data as someone of a similar age to the participants. By interviewing the adults I began the process of building relationships with key individuals in the Stoneleigh Project. This retreat and follow up weekend acted in some ways as a pilot that informed my discussions with the Stoneleigh Group about the task they wanted to undertake, its purpose and the methods they would like to use to undertake it.

Interviews and beyond

The co-operative inquiry was further supplemented by unstructured interviews at the follow up weekends and at other times, diaries and other writings that were offered to the data set, and telephone and e-mail interviews with all retreat members. In addition I conducted focus group discussions with the design team. These enabled me to make comparisons and connections between 'cells' whilst maintaining confidentiality where appropriate. I was able to attend some days during some of the retreats and most of the follow up weekends to support and observe the data collection. Although I attended with a role to play in the facilitation of these days the groups were made aware of my part in the evaluation. Briefings and question sessions about the evaluation were offered and often taken up.

I used an unstructured or, as Drever (1995) describes it, an ethnographic or ethno-methodological approach (p. 14), to encourage further the participants to decide on what events were significant and offer their own interpretations. Diaries, telephone and e-mail interviews were also undertaken in the same style. E-mail exchanges were especially helpful with a number of participants entering into unsolicited e-mail accounts of their experiences during and after the retreats that, in several cases, lasted for four years. The telephone interviews began with a structured aural questionnaire in order to collect biographical data.

Focus groups

In the second phase of piloting focus groups were conducted within and across 'cells' and included participants, host community members and mentors as well as facilitators. They were designed to explore in depth specific questions about the pedagogy and curriculum content of the retreats. In this situation the approach taken was what Drever (1995) terms a group interview using a semi-structured interview method (p. 16). These were led by a person from one of the Stoneleigh Group's member organisations or me and took place during the follow up weekends.

In practice there were times during forum gatherings and management group meetings that were also managed in this way. Like the focus groups, they developed narratives and concepts of aspects of the Stoneleigh Project and were a rich source of evidence. For example, the Stoneleigh Group forum held in 2001 included an hour long facilitated discussion about what the partners of the Stoneleigh Group thought spirituality meant to their organisations. This is a significant source of material that emerged from the management of the Stoneleigh Group rather than the conducting of the research. Reporting back and the subsequent questioning by members of the management team and the forums who were not involved in the retreats became valued by the design team especially as a way to clarify their thinking and values. On several occasions it identified new approaches to the data or raised new questions that could be fed back in to the next retreat group.

Analysing texts

Brewer claims that the analysis of ethnographic texts involves a number of issues of both a technical and a theoretical nature (Brewer, 2000). This section will describe the technical aspects of this research study. Key theoretical issues are explored in Chapter 6.

The principles guiding the analysis of the various texts in this study were as Brewer (2000, p. 106-107) identifies, to maintain a consistent, systematic and rigorous approach to the data. He goes on to describe a number of techniques that help to bring order to the data involving the organisation of texts 'into patterns, categories and descriptive units' (p. 108). As Brewer discusses, this process was a continuous task that, in some ways, can be understood to have begun with the formulation of the research questions and was constantly developing as early analyses began to inform further data collection and analysis. This, as Brewer claims, is partly explicit and partly implicit. The processes of the co-operative inquiry, feedback on my field and interview notes from the participants and reflexive techniques all helped to make some of the hidden organisation taking place in my mind visible. Inevitably this was, to some degree, partial.

The first stage of analysis in this research study was the descriptive coding of the data. This was done as soon after the data collection as possible and reviewed after each session in the field. All data was assigned a code that linked it to a date, an event, a participant and a format (see appendices 1 and 2). It was also coded for other categories including the venue of the event, especially in relation to the retreats, the cohort of the participant, the organisation to which the participant belonged (see appendix 1) and the role the participant took in the programme (for an explanation of the latter see Table 2 in Chapter 2, p. 24). Some data was also coded for age and gender though these were later dropped when they generated no apparent correlations of relevance to this study. These codes covered the factual aspects of the data.

The second phase of coding was what Brewer (2000) terms 'open codes' (p. 110). In the case of this study this coding was initially developed fairly loosely and refined, first by the co-operative inquiry process where this was relevant, or my own analysis and then by my

own systematic review of the data after each round of the pilot. The themes of this coding related to the questions addressed by this study. Examples include the categories of pedagogy, curriculum, life story and policy. Under each of these a tree of sub-categories was developed. These were constantly changing, re-organising and clustering as the study unfolded.

A further level of analysis used in this study involved what Brewer (2000) termed 'focal events' (p. 111) though, in this case, these foci included focal people as well as events. The events involved were initially the formal recognised events of the planning, delivery and dissemination of the pilot programme. This was enriched by a more detailed coding related to the emerging themes of the study. For example, the contexts for pedagogic interactions of power were coded for the situations in which they occurred. This coding was a great help in developing my analysis of the interplay of power and knowledge on the retreats. Coding the focal participants also helped to identify the participants I invited to be case studies (see below) in the latter stages of the research.

The evidence lent itself to multiple analyses. As Arnett (2006) suggests, I found that the life stories of the young people revealed personal, social and public as well as structural influences on their trajectories. All the young participants describe ways in which their agency was enhanced by the retreats and the other elements of the programme. These included raised self esteem, new and enhanced social networks, increases in skills especially relational skills, an understanding of youth work practice, an increase in confidence, greater self awareness, values clarification, greater awareness of their social issues and a clearer view of their aspirations. An analysis of these factors would be of great interest and value and is, to some degree, provided in this thesis. For example, it addresses Rickinson *et al's* (2004) appeal for more research that considers the individual narratives of experiences of outdoor education. However, despite the diversity of pathways followed by the young people, I suggest that the emerging theme in relation to the questions posed by this thesis supports Evans' (2002) idea of frustrated agency as a defining characteristic around which clusters of stories could usefully be understood. This frustration was perceived as located in the social and public worlds of the young people as they attempted to put values into action. They did not generally perceive themselves and their intra-

personal situations as limiting. As a result my focus became an interest in what the evidence had to say about these social and public factors that the young people perceived as frustrating their development and how they thought these were or could be overcome. I found certain theoretical frameworks to be helpful with this task.

Whilst social capital theories were of interest in exploring these ideas, especially the ideas that emerged concerning mobility, I found that, more specifically, it was certain aspects of what is considered to be social capital that were most relevant. As a result the analysis drew most heavily on Raffo and Reeves' (2000) social network categories, Furlong and Cartmel's (1997) concept of transition as a journey metaphor, many of Bernstein's (1971, 1975, 1996) concepts concerning the ideologies of education, citizenship and education, pedagogy and curriculum, Joas' (2000) concepts of values development, and Henderson *et al's* (2007) idea of mobility having more than an upward dimension. This has been the most detailed level of analysis applied in different ways to each of the foci of the study discussed in this chapter.

Brewer (2000) makes the distinction between categories and taxonomies (p. 114-115). In this study a number of the categories above were combined to create useful taxonomies of particular phenomena. For example, the ideological radicalism of the educational claims of the Stoneleigh Group was correlated with the pedagogy and the outcomes of the programme. Likewise, the aims of each member organisation of the Stoneleigh Group were correlated with the perceived trajectories of the young people.

The final stage in an ethnographic analysis, according to Brewer (2000, p. 117), is the search for negative cases. As with any aspect of this analysis this process was, in fact, ongoing. It was helpful not only in excluding certain themes and interpretations, but also in widening out the categories of analysis, especially in relation to critical incidents of power in the pedagogic practice of the retreats and in identifying the diversity of life histories and subsequent trajectories taken by the young people.

In practice, and in the field, much analysis takes place implicitly, in discourse with the participants and in following trains of thought initiated by what the researcher last observed, heard or read. The rigour of formulating categories for analysis and testing them for relevance and consistency turns what can be a confusing mountain of possible ideas into a rigorous and coherent narrative. This process continued long after the early interpretations of the data and through several reiterations of the writing of these chapters. In my experience the result is a deeper level of interpretation that stands up to documented evidence and gives the claims made in this thesis their authority. Inevitably, another researcher will not be able to substantiate my claims, as, despite the documenting and coding that is available for inspection, the analysis as well as the interpretation is influenced by my own view and many undocumented influences at the time. However, it would be possible to understand the rationale that leads from the evidence to the claims that are made in the conclusion to this study.

Focus 2: The Impact of the Stoneleigh Project on the Young People

During the second phase of the Stoneleigh Project I expanded the use of unstructured interviews in person, by telephone or e-mail in order to explore biographically the experiences of a number of participants. These were mostly young people but included some participants in the roles of host community member, mentor and facilitator. These interviews were introduced to help me to explore the third and fourth questions of the research study. These concerned the perceptions held by young people and others of the impact of the programme and were developed to consider whether or not it had been successful at supporting young people in becoming agents of social change.

The interviews included a 100% sampling by telephone of the participants involved in the programme up until that date. This exercise completed the bio-metric data and extended the biographical data of past participants. An analysis of this data resulted in identifying a number of clusters of common situations based on some of the ideas discussed in Chapter 4, in particular the concepts of social networks and social capital (see Table 4, Chapter 10, p. 240).

At the same time the ongoing ethnographic study continued to collect data through co-operative inquiry and participant observation. In this phase I paid attention to the presentations and discussions reporting on the programme's progress, the meetings at which the development of the programme, and especially the retreats at new venues, were discussed and the follow up weekends. I also sampled all of the retreats and increased the visits to young people and their mentors after the retreats. With this second focus I paid increased attention to the narratives the participants told of their life stories and the processes that supported and influenced these narratives.

A Critical Approach

The Stoneleigh Group had made claims that can be understood as taking a critical position in relation to certain aspects of society. The Stoneleigh Project was constructed as a pedagogy of resistance intended to support marginalised young people who shared these critiques in becoming agents of social change. From a methodological perspective the critical stance of the research set out to test the claims of the Stoneleigh Group and to document what took place when this programme advocated for the radical outcomes they claimed to be achieving in the wider youth work field. I was planning to observe power in society at work within the pedagogy of the programme and within the policy developments of the institutions of youth work.

At this stage the field notes for this research diverged more markedly from the field notes I was making that were shared with the evaluation work. This took the form of extra interpretations of my observations and interviews in the context of different theoretical frameworks that I was beginning to consider as a context for the analysis of the data.

Case studies

In order to extend the longitudinal study and to seek a great depth of knowledge about the lives of the participants during and after the programme, I decided to treat a number of young people as case studies. I planned to follow their stories for as long as possible, partly through observation but mostly through continued unstructured interviews, diaries and e-mails.

The choice of the young people to be included in this aspect of the study was partly systematic and partly pragmatic. I reviewed the provisional categories of personal and social backgrounds identified by the analysis of the biographical data of the young participants up until that point (43 in total). This led to the identification of 3 categories of young participants (see Table 4, Chapter 10, p. 239) on 4 types of trajectory (see Diagram 1, Chapter 12, p. 290). I also sought to include samples from as many different Stoneleigh Group member organisations as possible and from as many different cohorts as I could. I then set this short list against those young people who had already attracted my attention in observations and interviews as well as those who were actively involved in providing me with unsolicited data. The result was a good match. I expanded the number of young people slightly and invited them to be involved in this extension of the study. They all agreed. I took a systematic interest in their experiences and stories from then on. This group is represented in the 12 young people whose stories are documented in this thesis (see Table 4, Chapter 10, p. 239 and Table 5, Chapter 12, p. 287).

Focus 3: A Critical Analysis of the Struggle for the Meaning and Dissemination of the Findings of the Stoneleigh Project

The exploration of power in the pedagogic discourses between the Stoneleigh Group members and between the Group and other youth work institutions was a third and additional focus of the research. It was an interest that emerged from the data as the study examined the power relations of young people with society through this particular example of youth work practice. It became particularly visible because of the ideological positions of some of the Stoneleigh Group members and their aspirations to use the pilot as a basis to advocate for a more radical youth work curriculum.

For this focus I was able to use and extend the participant observation of meetings and events, conduct semi-structured interviews with this focus in mind and draw on a range of secondary sources that included letters, minutes, reports, proposals, presentations and publications. The secondary sources were illuminating for an insight into the ways in which different voices in this discourse constructed and reconstructed the reports from the participants in the co-operative inquiry. However, it was observations of the social dynamics of meetings and conversations at other events that gave the richest picture of the

struggle that took place to define the established interpretation of the programme. It is regretted that I was inadvertently not invited to some of the meetings and conversations within this research study. These consisted of formal events such as consultations held by the spirituality in youth work working party and working meetings of The Foundation for Adventure and the Wrekin Trust. In addition a number of informal but important conversations occurred spontaneously as a result of chance encounters at meetings and events unrelated to this study but at which the same people were in attendance. The data in these cases relies on secondary sources and reported experiences that I did not observe directly. I have treated it with less confidence as a result and the claims made for this part of the research must be treated with some circumspection.

Ethical Considerations

As well as the importance of gaining informed consent from all the participants in this study it was important to me that the process of collecting data was both of interest to the participants concerned and congruent with the overall purposes of the Stoneleigh Project. It was my hope that by providing narratives of their life stories and holding discourses about the pedagogy and curriculum of the programme the experience of the programme for the young people would be enhanced and the development of the pilot would be supported. The facilitators of the programme included the experience of being part of the research study in their annual review. The results were always positive and encouraging especially from the young people followed as case studies, the management team of the programme and from the facilitators developing the retreats. The outcomes of the research study in this regard are discussed further below.

The participants' confidentiality is protected in this study by the use of pseudonyms.

The member organisations of the Stoneleigh Group are identified by name in this thesis. This is with their consent. I considered making them anonymous in any case. However, the organisations concerned are readily identifiable from the published work of the evaluation project. It also makes the thesis an easier read. I have introduced anonymity for these organisations in Chapter 13 alone. This is my decision and it is based on the sensitivity of

some of the material and the difficulty of confirming consent before publication at this distance from the events.

Consent for the research study was also provided by the member organisations. As well as informing the development of the pilot programme in which they were all interested it is hoped that the final version of this thesis will also be of interest to them in the development of both their pedagogic practices and policy development. The members of the Stoneleigh Group directly involved in the advocacy work have already drawn on preliminary findings of this research. They expressed appreciation for this access.

Undertaking a combined evaluation and research study raises some ethical concerns. There are some benefits including a close involvement with the participants and organisations over an extended study and the effective use of resources and, in this case, access to additional resources for spending time in the field. Additionally, the questions addressed by the evaluative study were of direct interest to the research inquiry enriching the data and deepening the analysis both for the evaluation, as mentioned above, and research outcomes.

One concern was that, as discussed in Chapter 6, the data collected for evaluative purposes was undertaken through a co-operative inquiry yet the research took a critical perspective. As a minimum this required that the researcher was as clear as possible about the different approach taken by the research overlay and sought additional consent for this work. However, this issue seems to have caused little concern. I understand this to be because of the long-term nature of the study. This allowed for the development of close working relations with the participants and organisations and an active interest on the part of most of the organisations and the participants in the early findings of the research work. It has not been possible to keep the participants and organisations informed of the later findings of the research once the Stoneleigh Group was disbanded though some individuals have been informed at their request and have given feedback. This is less satisfactory.

In practical terms the evaluative study began before the research. This has meant that data I may have collected for research purposes, for example more detailed life histories from the participants prior to their involvement in the Stoneleigh Project, was not collected. Neither was it possible to collect data from young people invited to become involved in the Stoneleigh Project but who declined. This has limited the potential of the analysis in some areas. The long-term nature of this study has meant that, in other situations, it has been possible to return to participants with new questions for research purposes without this compromising the quality of the data.

Another concern was that that I would find concepts and claims made on behalf of the Stoneleigh Project for the evaluative study difficult to critique for the research. This was initially the case. The introduction of the new perspectives of Bernstein's (1971) theories after the evaluative study had been completed enabled the analysis to progress constructively.

Reflexivity

As Brewer (2000) and Silverman (2000) point out, an ethnographic approach that takes the position that the data being collected is an interpretation of experience on the part of the participant must also be aware that the researcher will also be interpreting the evidence in a partial way. In Chapter 1 I identified the professional and research interests that led me to take an interest in conducting this research. These included a sympathy for the ideological position of the Stoneleigh Group and the pedagogic approach of Camas. Alerting the reader to the potential prejudices and foci that the researcher holds is one step that Silverman (2000) recommends. I have referred above to several methodological strategies that were introduced to help to counter the tendency to emphasise observations of interest to me. These included asking for feedback from interviewees and those under observation. In my experience the co-operative inquiry method also counters this tendency effectively. Focus groups had the same impact often introducing new ideas or emphasising different areas to those I initially held.

In addition, adopting already established theoretical concepts with which to analyse the data helped considerably by introducing already tested frames of reference. This process helped me to notice and include a variety of observations that would otherwise have been left out of this research including ones that were counter to my own hopes for the Stoneleigh Project. Conference presentations both within the Stoneleigh Group's activities and in the wider youth work and outdoor education research communities also provided critical feedback.

Inevitably, some aspect of my own view will pervade this thesis. Brewer (2000) suggests that, rather than invalidating the evidence and its analysis, work of this kind maintains its validity through its usefulness. The benefits of this research are discussed below. A final step I have taken is to provide a critical biography of the researcher (Appendix 3) that highlights personal and professional events that might influence my view. Readers who are concerned to explore further the potential bias of this researcher are invited to read this appendix in order to help their critical reading of the text. In my view holding a strong interest in and having considerable experience of the educational practices I was researching had many advantages, particularly the opportunities this gave to inquire more deeply into the evidence. From the subject's point of view, I think it was to their advantage for me to follow my interests. By doing this I was able to make best use of myself as a resource in their work. The same can aid of the benefits to the research outcomes. Additionally, the importance of maintaining a critical position in relation to the values I hold added overall to the degree of critical reflection applied to the evidence and, I believe, enhanced the analysis and my own learning.

Benefits and Dilemmas

One of the aims of this research was that it was useful to the participants who were involved in the case study. It is claimed that the undertaking of this research benefited the participants and partner organisations in the Stoneleigh Group. A number of concerns for the way in which the research impacted on the lives of the participants are also discussed.

The participants.

The Stoneleigh Project had the potential to support young people in their transitions to adulthood and to support youth workers in their professional development. It also had the potential to raise hopes and aspirations that were not fulfilled and so act in a counter-productive way. It could also initiate trajectories that were perceived as desirable but, in time, were experienced as dislocating or dissatisfying. For the Stoneleigh Group partners this is an ongoing dilemma to which their general response is that to do nothing for marginalised young people is worse and that experience tells them that their work is valued. In addition all the organisations have professional practices in place to support young people and staff in difficulty. These included the voluntary nature of involvement by young people, the ready availability and pro-activity of mentors, the open-ended life of each individual's participation in the programme and the support already in place for the volunteer. For the staff this included supervision and training.

These were the concerns of the Stoneleigh Group and its partners. The issues for this research were to ensure, as far as was possible, that the participants' experience of the research was one in which, if anything, it supported what were perceived as beneficial outcomes and did not cause distress at times of difficulty. It is my view that this was generally the experience of the participants. There are several instances during which young people who were tackling difficult personal issues reported that the opportunity to talk to or e-mail the researcher was helpful in thinking things through or coping with emotions. Actions by the researcher that helped were the voluntary nature of participation in the research, frequent reminders of the accessibility of the researcher and the presence of the researcher as a participant observer during most of the residencies and follow up weekends during which effective relationships could be established. This was further enhanced by the researcher's previous experience as a youth worker.

One case caused concern. This involved a mentor who, at the close of the Stoneleigh Project, resigned from his post and set off travelling. Whilst it is known that, as a result of his reflective involvement in the research, he had come to perceive that his work was tending in a direction he thought to be unsatisfactory, it is not clear if he perceived his

resignation as a positive step or what happened to him personally and professionally after he left.

A number of youth worker participants claimed that being part of the research influenced their practice within the partner organisations and elsewhere. A number of young people also acknowledged the way in which taking part in the research supported their personal and professional development over and above the role-played by the Stoneleigh Project.

The partner organisations

I had two areas of concern with regard to my involvement in the partner organisations prior to the research. As outlined in Chapter 2, I have undertaken an evaluative study of Camas the year before beginning this research. In this case, I understand this earlier work to be guided by similar questions, methods and ethics as the Stoneleigh Project evaluation and research. The insight this gave me into the educational practices and beliefs of Camas staff were, in my view, an asset to the Stoneleigh Group and to this research. The evaluation study at Camas was also concluded before the evaluation and research of the Stoneleigh Group began. This ensured that there were no conflicts of interest for me in interpreting the actions of staff at Camas in different ways for different contexts.

I am co-founder and was a trustee of Eden Community Outdoors, one of the Stoneleigh Group partners. Whilst this role overlapped with the life of the Stoneleigh Group it did not overlap with ECO's participation in the Project. They joined in 2003 once the retreats were operating in England. This was after I had ceased to be a trustee or have any active involvement in ECO. Concerns still remain that my sympathy for the approaches of ECO and the staff and young people involved could bias my interpretation of data. This is possible and was largely counter-acted on retreats by the co-operative inquiry method in which participants worked together to develop the interpretation of their experiences. Follow up studies required an extra degree of reflexivity to help redress any imbalance. Declaring my interest in ECO and my sympathies with its approach, and approaches such as those at Camas, I think, allows the reader to be aware of those processes and outcomes

of the Stoneleigh Group that I consider to be ‘good things’ in youth work and to use their own judgements and contexts to assess the practices analysed in this thesis for themselves.

Throughout the life of the Stoneleigh Project the methods used for data collection were designed to support the development of the pilot programme. In the view of the Stoneleigh Group, it was of particular help in transferring the retreat concept from Camas to other venues.

The research was able to support a number of initiatives undertaken by the partner organisations. The initial stages of the research were used to help the Camas community successfully defend their approach to informal education out of doors to their umbrella body, The Iona Community. As a result the Iona Community has supported Camas by seeking substantial revenue funding. The buildings are currently undergoing a refurbishment to sustain its work for the foreseeable future.

However, counter to the aspirations of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group, the research has apparently had limited impacts on the practices of the partner voluntary youth organisations with a few exceptions. Two have recently adopted the retreat programme and continue to run it on an annual basis. The remainder made commitments to explore bringing the ideas developed from the Stoneleigh Project into community based rather than retreat based work. To my knowledge this has not taken place.

A contribution to dissemination and advocacy

The Stoneleigh Group claimed that the research played a significant role in supporting the advocacy work. This, it was said, was achieved by generating ideas within the Stoneleigh Group, establishing credibility for the ideas during the advocacy work and supporting the debate through presentations and workshops at a number of conferences. The partner organisations interested in disseminating the practices developed by the Stoneleigh Project and advocating for spiritual development in youth work have been able to make extensive use of reports and presentations based on the research.

The Stoneleigh Group held two networking conferences to share their ideas. Eighty representatives of voluntary youth organisations as well as national policy makers attended each. Interim reports on the research findings were made at both events. Some of the findings of this research are still being used to inform current policy consultations regarding national youth work curricula.

In my view, the research largely achieved its aim of being of value to the participants in the research from their points of view, both individuals and organisations. It can be argued that conducting the research was also an educational process for all those involved.

Conclusion

This thesis uses some evidence initially acquired for a somewhat different purpose. Managing the evaluation of the practices of the Stoneleigh Project and then adding to this evidence to take a critical perspective on the Stoneleigh Group in the context of the wider developments in youth work and youth transition was potentially problematic. In my view it has worked well. This has been possible because of the methodological approach taken to the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project. This led to a long-term study involving a close involvement with a stable group of youth workers and an increasingly stable group of young people. They worked hard to represent their knowledge, experience and views to me as fully and accurately as they could. That it was known from early on that I had two purposes in mind for the evidence meant that I was given much support for both. Interim reports for the benefit of the Stoneleigh Group drew on the research work as well as the evaluation especially in the latter stages. This input was valued by the management team as well as by the advocates working on behalf of the Stoneleigh Group. The conference papers also aided the advocacy work.

Whilst an interpretative approach remains founded on my understandings of the Stoneleigh Group and its work the co-operative inquiry approach gives the evidence considerable rigour. My interpretation has been subjected to several levels of feedback as a result including the public critique of my presentation at the final Stoneleigh Group conference

by the participants of the last two years of programmes. As a result I feel confident that the voices of the participants are strongly represented in this study.

It is hard to generalise from a case study. However the in depth analysis over a long term has provided insight into the pedagogic practice of the Stoneleigh Project and the politics of youth and youth work in contemporary society that would not have been possible with a 'black box' approach to the experiences on the programmes or the interactions of the members of the Stoneleigh Group. This understanding has helped to inform the development of the practice of the Stoneleigh Project and so the practice of a number of youth workers and youth work organisations. As a result it has also helped the young people involved in their transitions to adulthood and, in some cases, careers in youth work. Through the advocacy work of the Stoneleigh Group it has also helped to inform the national debate on the role of values and spiritual development in the youth work curriculum. According to Brewer (2000) one criterion for a critical ethnographic inquiry is that it is useful to the subjects of the research. I believe this study has achieved that aim.

Chapter 8:

Knowledge, Power and Control in Education:

Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

Chapter 4 set the Stoneleigh Project in the wider context of ideas about the changing ways that youth transition is understood in UK society. These changes were thought to be emancipatory; that is a wider sector of society was understood to have received more of a share of power and resources. At the same time these changes were understood to be controlling as the power holders in society sought to ensure that their established values were adopted and upheld (Smith, 2000). Youth culture has been interpreted as both a resistance to this ‘oppression’ and a space that opens up a dialogue between the generations about the culture of the future at a time of rapid change (Helve and Bynner, 2007). Throughout these changes the concepts of youth and youth work had been developing. Chapter 5 discussed how youth work acted as a mediator between more socially mobile young people in transition to adulthood and the values of the established society. Throughout this young people have increasingly been regarded as their own locus of moral order and control. As the world of work has changed and the rate of this change has accelerated, young people have also increasingly been expected to construct an identity that was different from that of their social roots but in keeping with the established norms of the public world. Youth work was described as being increasingly responsible for helping those young people who were struggling with this task.

The Stoneleigh Group members were described in Chapter 2 as voluntary organisations engaged in this work. As is shown in Appendix 4, at the centre of their work is the task of addressing some of the current inequities in society. Whilst the individual member organisations are concerned with supporting young people in the transformation of their personal circumstances, Chapter 2 describes how the Stoneleigh Group did not want just to empower young people to restore themselves to constructive pathways of transition into adulthood. Its purpose was the radical objective of contributing to the transformation of the values and practices of society that are perceived as responsible for the inequities in the

first place. To do this it explicitly set out to support young people in becoming agents of social transformation. Some partners in the Stoneleigh Group described this as spiritual development.

The initial questions that this research asked about the Stoneleigh Group (p. 3–4) centred on the ways in which power and knowledge were managed at the micro level in the curriculum and pedagogy of the Stoneleigh Project and especially the retreats. Issues of power and knowledge were identified in the evaluation report as central to the curriculum of the Stoneleigh Project. Self-knowledge, knowledge of social problems, and knowledge of alternative values that could lead to different social conditions were at the heart of the Stoneleigh Project's programme. The way power was constructed in the programmes was also central to the pedagogic relationships between the adults and young people. This, it was thought, not only helped to create trusting relationships, it also provided a setting in which experiential and social knowledge could give voice to the meanings the young people found in their programme. Additionally, these pedagogic relationships were thought to model alternative strategies for social relations between the young people and other family, peer group, and community members. Such knowledge, it was hoped, would empower the young people to take action and through this bring about transformations in their communities. This research set out to examine these claims critically.

The Stoneleigh Group was also attempting to develop an educational initiative that it hoped would offer a different way of working with the power relations between young people, society, and youth work. This second area of interest for the research project emerged as the study was under way. It became concerned with exploring the macro level struggle for control of what was claimed by the Stoneleigh Group to be a radical approach to spiritual development supporting young people committed to social transformation. This part of the research focussed on the process by which knowledge about the programme was constructed. A significant discourse, that is discussions in which the partners in the Stoneleigh Group debated the meaning of the Stoneleigh Project, took place. This struggle to assert the dominant meaning and the control of this knowledge as it was disseminated and then used in advocacy work became the second focus of this research project. This allowed the research to explore a case study of the role of knowledge and power in the

politics of the relationships between society and the construction of pedagogies of what the Stoneleigh Group called informal education for young people.

This research started without developing a theoretical perspective on the educational processes of informal outdoor education. This was intentional. The aim was to pay attention to the narratives of the participants in the Stoneleigh Project rather than to collect evidence through pre-determined theoretical lenses. Later, theories of education from a critical sociological perspective helped me to address the questions posed by this research. Basil Bernstein (1971; 1975; 1996), an educational social analyst who has developed a theory of the sociology of education that critically examines pedagogy, power, and knowledge at both the macro and the micro levels provides a useful framework for the analysis of this research. Bernstein explored knowledge and power within education.

However, the Stoneleigh Project was centrally concerned with values as well as knowledge and also understood values to be significantly linked to power and transformation. The philosopher Joas (2000) provides an analysis of the development of values in a social context and from a critical perspective that I suggest is congruent with the approach of Bernstein. Later in this chapter I introduce his ideas in order to compliment Bernstein's conceptual tools and to extend the framework with which to analyse the Stoneleigh Project into the domain of values development.

Bernstein's and Joas' theories explore the issues of power, control, identity, and socialisation within education. Bernstein states that '(h)ow a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control' (Bernstein, 1971, p. 202). He developed a theoretical model for the analysis of formal education in schools and universities based on a classification of knowledge. Its purpose was to help answer the question 'how are forms of experience, identity and relation evoked, maintained and changed by the formal transmission of educational knowledge ...?' (p. 203). His theory focuses on three 'message systems' (p. 203); curricula, pedagogy, and evaluation.

His early work was largely applied to formal educational institutions such as schools and universities. However, in his later work Bernstein (1996) states

I also want to make it very clear that my concept of pedagogic practice is somewhat wider than the relationships that go on in schools. Pedagogic practices would include the relationships between doctor and patient, the relationships between psychiatrist and the so-called mentally ill, the relationships between architects and planners. In other words, the notion of pedagogic practice that I shall be using will regard pedagogic practice as a fundamental social context through which cultural reproduction-production takes place.

(p. 17)

This indicates that Bernstein maintained his theories were of relevance to all pedagogic relationships including those of informal and outdoor education. This suggests that Bernstein would assert that his theories were relevant to informal education and so are applicable as a tool for analysis in this research. Joas understood his concept of values development to apply to all aspects of development in private, social and public spheres and including informal, non-formal and formal education.

Ord's work on the youth work curriculum explores many of the themes that are central to Bernstein's ideas. He analyses curriculum in terms of content, product and process and explores the themes of knowledge and power in the relationships between society, the youth worker and the young person (Ord, 2007). This provides further support for the relevance of Bernstein's and Joas' theories to this context.

This chapter introduces the theories of Bernstein and Joas and their relevance to this research. They consider questions of identity, socialisation, power and control within education in the context of society. In this research Bernstein's ideas are applied to the micro level of analysis necessary to interpret and analyse the practices of the Stoneleigh Project. In this way, the Stoneleigh Group's claim for a radical approach to informal education can be examined. At the same time, Bernstein's theories are applied to the macro

level of analysis needed to discuss the Stoneleigh Group's work in the context of trends in youth work, youth transition, and society.

Joas provides a development of Bernstein's ideas beyond knowledge construction and acquisition into the realm of values development. Part of the intention of the Stoneleigh Group was to provide a curriculum based on values development. In order to look at values development as a form of knowledge development the ideas of Joas (2000) have been applied. He explores the nature of the genesis of values arising from individual experience and how they might interact with the values of society.

The Underlying Principles of Bernstein's Theories

Bernstein's theories are founded on a set of three pedagogic rights; one each for the personal, social, and political domains of life. These are outlined in his last book (Bernstein, 1996) and discussed below. He developed these concepts to help analyse an education service that he thought was 'a public institution central to the production and reproduction of distributive injustices' (p. 5). He thought schools were failing in some measure to provide the egalitarian opportunities for all young people that underpin the principles of social democratic values enshrined in the Education Reform Act (Ministry of Reconstruction, 1956). Schools did not, he claimed, transform the circumstances of young people but reproduced a culture in which the dominant holders of power maintained and reproduced a society in which their power was upheld. He might be intrigued by the application of his theories to a youth service that claims to be committed to supporting those who are most marginalised by this educational system (Prince's Trust, 2004) and by a project that sought to support marginalised young people who might be prepared to challenge the established order.

Bernstein (1996) saw in education the potential for creating an effective democracy. In his view the citizens of the ideal democracy are in an active relationship with society both receiving goods from it and giving something to it. He argues:

... people must feel that they have a stake in society. Stake may be a bad metaphor, because by stake I mean that not only are people concerned to receive something but that they are also concerned to *give* something.

(p. 6).

Bernstein claimed that developing this sense of a 'stake' in society leads to a set of three pedagogic rights that are the responsibility of education to provide. The first is the right to individual enhancement. By this he means the opportunity to be socially mobile and for the education process to support this mobility. He thought that it was the role of education to confront the social, intellectual or personal constraints that inhibit mobility so that they are not experienced 'as prisons, or stereotypes' (p. 6). In Bernstein's view, developing people's critical understanding of their situation has the potential to create these 'new possibilities' (p. 6) or pathways. The Stoneleigh Project sought to help marginalised young people confront the constraints on their transitions to adulthood so that they could develop constructive pathways to adult identities. It sought to provide a second chance for young people who were thought of as having been disenfranchised by education so far.

The second right is 'to be included socially, intellectually, culturally and personally' (p. 7). Bernstein understands inclusion not as absorption into a group but as autonomy operating at the social level, as a respect for diversity. For Bernstein there was a quality of relationship between people that is one of universal respect and equality that transcends the structural divisions in society.

Bernstein (1996) used the term '*communitas*' (p. 7) to conceptualise this idea. However, he does not expand on its meaning at great length. Nevertheless, it is a useful concept in relation to the Stoneleigh Project as it can shed light on the retreat phase of the programme. Turner (1982), the theorist who has done much to apply the idea of *communitas* to sociological thought, argues that it refers to an underlying and generalised social bond between all human beings, and between them and the world. In this state he claims human beings relate to one another freely and as totalities. Turner understands this condition as one that is opposed to the social structures of position and identity but in a necessary and

ideally balanced relationship with it. Rapport and Overing (2000) summarise Turner's concept of '*communitas*' as 'a sense of heightened togetherness which people might feel with one another once the superficial clothing of age, status, occupation, gender and other differences had been removed' (p. 233). They go on to describe how Turner understood '*communitas*' to contribute to a social state of liminality, a space free of social structures and open to creativity and criticality. In Turner's view, they claim, this liminoidal state could be applied to 'a great variety of institutions, practices, movements, situations, roles and persons' (p. 233). They summarise Turner's sense of it as

... a condition of 'sacred marginality', ... characterized by something of the anti-structural, the transitional and processual, the creative and re-formative, the reversing, the resistant and rebellious, the communal and communing. They stripped themselves of normative everyday identities and refrained from normal practices in order to achieve vantage points from which the social structure could be critiqued and re-formed.

(p. 234).

This concept can be used as an analytic tool applied not only to the pedagogic practices of the retreats but also to the curriculum development of the Stoneleigh Project created in a space removed from the conventional practices of the partner organisations.

Rapport and Overing (2000) argue that '*communitas*' is an important aspect of the social world that is liberating and empowering and so an important condition that supports social mobility and personal transformation. They argue:

... individuals needed to alternate between the two experiential states. For, the creative power of *communitas* fashioned the being of individuals and communities in liberating, potentiating ways, while the routinization of this creative togetherness into norm-governed distinctions and relations afforded a stability conducive to taking stock and taking action.

(p. 36)

In other words, whilst a state of *communitas* can support personal and social transformation, for the individual to establish this new identity and for it to engage constructively with the world he or she must re-enter the normal, structured world. The Stoneleigh Project designers claimed that their programme spanned both a space in which the young people could re-consider their identities and a space where they could apply these identities in new ways in the social world. From this analysis of the programme it is possible to consider whether the claims of the Stoneleigh Group satisfy Bernstein's second right. The culture of positive regard and equality of worth that the Stoneleigh Project was seeking to develop with the help of the egalitarian principles of the retreat community at Camas could readily be likened to the ideas of '*communitas*' and liminality as set out above. This would certainly support the Stoneleigh Group's assumption that young people whose personal worth is valued by adults and who experience an egalitarian culture will develop in such a way as to encourage them to become creative actors of their lives and move towards realising their potentials.

The third right Bernstein proposed operates at the political level and is the right to participate. This, he made clear, is not, in his view, simply about discourse but about practice for which there are consequences; that is participation 'in the construction, maintenance and transformation of order' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 7). By 'order' he meant the social order influenced by the identities that young people construct in their transitions to adulthood. He thought the process of transition should not simply be about finding a path but, in some cases, should involve supporting young people in creating new pathways and so shifting the order of society.

It is against the quality of the provision of these three rights that Bernstein thought that an educational system should be evaluated. In Chapter 5 I discussed the changes affecting the work of the Youth Service in helping young people in transition to adulthood. I indicated that, as well as supporting a transition to work, a family and a home, that Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) suggest that transition today also involves supporting young people in becoming citizens in the normative sense with responsibilities as well as rights. The Stoneleigh Group, with its overtly political as well as personal and social educational aims of supporting young people to become agents of social change, can be understood as an

pilot programme seeking to support young people in becoming active citizens. This approach might fall into one of two of Ord's (2007) models of youth work, that is 'critical social education; or 'radical social change'. For Ord critical social education involves developing a critical position in relation to social relations in society whilst radical social change concerns efforts to challenge the structural factors underlying inequality. Bernstein's concepts, framed by his overarching interest in an education for democracy that supports young people in becoming active citizens, would seem appropriate in this context.

The Current Relevance of Bernstein's Ideas

In his early writings, Bernstein (1971) argued that power and control are arranged at that time as they have been historically. Bernstein suggested that the approach taken to education suited a nineteenth century industrial system that needed people who could fill well-defined roles and unquestioningly accept the values of society; 'a submissive and inflexible man' (p. 225). He believed this educational approach was not thought to be appropriate in the modern economic or cultural context. This is because, in his view, policy makers thought that knowledge was re-organising, labour needed to be more flexible, social order was changing and there were, within a more diverse society, problems of control. Society, it was claimed, now needed people to be considerably more flexible whilst still accepting its increasingly diverse values; 'a conforming but flexible man' (p. 225). This, Bernstein claimed, heralded some liberalisation of the educational system but not necessarily in a way or to an extent that moved it in a direction that would satisfy his views on the educational rights of young people.

Since then further changes in society have occurred and the pace of change has accelerated. In the preface to Bernstein's (1996) latest book Singh and Luke (1996) remark 'it would have been difficult in the 1950s and 1960s to anticipate the impact of trans-national capitalism on work, consumption and leisure at the end of the century' (p. xi) and later add that 'educators face a more volatile and complex social geography...' (p. xii). Whilst these social and economic changes have continued on the same trajectory as Bernstein discussed, the educational system has, Singh and Luke claim, remained unresponsive and so, from this perspective, much of Bernstein's early analysis can be said to still apply. Whilst there have been many changes in the educational system even since

1996, it can be argued that none of these make a significant difference to the way the established institutions maintain power and control. Identities remain structured around areas of knowledge imparted in a traditional curriculum structure and by unreformed pedagogic practices that support the knowledge claims of the educational hierarchy. Indeed, it has been argued that the educational practices that Bernstein understood to be counter to the values of a democracy have been extended into the university system (Humberstone, 2007). Universities, she claims, are increasingly in the business of constructing identities suited to the labour needs of a nation rather than developing active citizens for a democratic way of life.

Other authors have reviewed Bernstein's ideas in the light of recent trends. Evans and Davies (2004) setting the scene for their work on 'Body Knowledge and Control in Physical Education', a text that draws on Bernstein's theories, refer to Giddens' (1991) and Becks' (1992) ideas of the risk society of the western world. Evans and Davies present the problems of identity construction by claiming

we ... now seem to be faced with countless choices (over relationships, diet, procreation, looks, sexuality, etc.) where previously there were few, or none. Ironically, this has made life more uncertain and stressful, less comfortable psychologically.

(p. 36–37)

As was discussed in Chapter 4, young people are contending with fragmented social networks, the changing nature of employment and a renewed moral panic variously describing them as deviant or vulnerable and certainly problematic. Yet, as Singh and Luke (1996) point out, traditional approaches to education have 'proven surprisingly resilient' (p. xi).

Giddens (1999) argues that modern society is one that calls for 'less centralisation and a greater level of individual decision-making in everyday life' (p. 36) and 'the idea that human beings should be more autonomous and responsible ...' (p. 37). This would

suggest that, even from a pragmatic rather than an ideological point of view, educational systems are in need of transformation. This paradox between the traditional form of education and other understandings of what a more effective approach could be is further enhanced by the conclusions of Chapters 4 and 5. These suggest that young people are increasingly expected to become agents of their own transitions to adulthood and their own moral centres. Yet they are subjected to increasingly centralised formal and informal education.

Bernstein recognised this same dilemma. He argued that there are two competing trends attempting to influence educational practices. One he claimed was based on the idea of 'retrospective identities'. These he claimed would favour a return to the imaginary certainties of a society that was thought of as a monoculture. The other advocates were supporters of what he termed 'prospective identities'. They, he claimed, would argue for the possibility of a new social contract based around issues of difference and community' (Bernstein, 1996). Maintaining and even enhancing a strongly regulated system would seem to be counter to the needs of the society yet this is what Singh and Luke (1996) claim is happening.

Jeffs and Smith's (2002) claim that the Youth Service is not even maintaining its traditional emancipatory approach but has acquired a more strongly regulated and narrow curriculum under the Connexions Service brand than previously. They remark on the intrusion of the State into the purposes, curriculum, and pedagogy of youth work narrowing its ambitions to vocational training and the fixing of social ills. Evans and Davies (2004) draw on Ritzer (2004) when they refer to this narrowing of curricula within schools to skills and competences as a 'Macdonaldisation of society' (2004). I have argued previously (Loynes, 1998) that these trends identified by Evans and Davies (2004) are also occurring in outdoor education. The voluntary youth sector has, to some degree, been able to resist these trends although outcome-based government funding has led to practices in this sector focussed on specific groups, with specific strategies to fix certain social ills and lasting for prescribed periods of time (Elias et al., 2002). These influences are resisted by at least some partners in the Stoneleigh Group. This resistance is seen as significant

enough to be explicitly referred to on some of their web sites (Endeavour Training, 2006; Weston Spirit, 2006).

The Stoneleigh Project can be understood as an attempt to counter this tendency. The Stoneleigh Group partners were supporting in various ways marginalised young people struggling through the extended period of youth without a pedagogic handrail. They set out to help them to construct identities by challenging their fragmented social networks in a horizontal youth culture. However, this youth culture is one that is partly set on rejecting the values of society in order to create a space in which to achieve some autonomy and control and respond to the rapidly changing values and opportunities of the society around them. The Stoneleigh Project, according to its aspirations, sought to provide a new pedagogic response that also sustained something of this autonomy and control. The purpose of this was to allow for greater agency with which to choose values, potentially ones that were contrary to the mainstream values of society. Therefore, this was intended not only to provide a challenge to the trends in the statutory Youth Service identified by Jeffs and Smith (2002). It was meant to go beyond supporting marginalised young people into the adult world of work by encouraging them to confront the sources of the inequalities they had experienced within educational institutions.

Bernstein's theories can be utilised to support the interpretation and analysis of modern educational practices. His concerns for a democratic education and the trends that he identified that, he claimed, counter such an education are, Evans and Davies (2004) Jeffs and Smith (2002) and Humberstone (2007) suggest, still relevant. Bernstein's thinking can be applied to the Stoneleigh Group and its work in the context of the pedagogic debate about the role and methods of youth work and the nature of youth and young people in transition to adulthood. The next section discusses the ways in which Bernstein's theories help in an analysis of the Stoneleigh Group and its work.

Bernstein's Theories and the Stoneleigh Project

Bernstein's theories of education are helpful in analysing educational institutions at the macro and the micro levels. At the macro level they help with an understanding of how the

distribution of power and resources in society are reproduced or transformed by educational practices. At the micro level they support the analysis of relations between the transmitter (the teacher in Bernstein's terminology) and the acquirer (the student) of knowledge. This can reveal how power relations are maintained or changed in the pedagogic process. At the macro level Bernstein's ideas are applied to the analysis of the Stoneleigh Project and its relations with the voluntary youth organisations that created it, the Youth Service, and the society in which the Youth Service and young people are situated. At the micro level his models help in the analysis of the curriculum and pedagogy and are used to analyse the relations between the participants in the Stoneleigh Project and the beliefs of the Stoneleigh Group. It also enables the analysis of the way in which the intervention affected the lives of the participants.

Macro Level Applications

In his theory Bernstein (1971, p. 17-38) identified two types of curricula. He did this by considering the strength or weakness of the boundaries around the content of a curriculum. He believed that the contents of collection curricula are strongly insulated and bounded from each other. This, he suggested means they interact weakly or not at all with each other and with the everyday world of the pupil. The classic school curriculum is a good example with traditional subjects such as mathematics, physics and so on. The integrated curriculum would, Bernstein claims, have a weaker structuring of knowledge. Subjects would be more inclusive and draw on several traditional sources. The relatively new university subject of ecology is a good example drawing on the traditional fields of biology, geography and so on. Bernstein used two concepts to describe in more detail the boundaries of curriculum content. Classification (Bernstein, 1996, p. 19-21) refers to the degree of differentiation between the contents of each knowledge unit, for example subjects in school. In the case of a strong collection type, classification will, he stated, be strong with little knowledge allowed to cross a boundary into another knowledge area. In a strong integrated type, classification would be weak and knowledge from several areas may be combined and recombined. Changes in the curriculum are also more likely to occur in the integrated type.

Bernstein used the idea of framing (Bernstein, 1996, p. 26-28) to define the pedagogy; the nature of the relationship between teacher and taught. He did not mean by this simply the style of teaching but the way in which the styles of teaching control what can and cannot be transmitted as knowledge. It 'refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organisation and pacing of the knowledge transmitted and received...' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 205). This concept of framing is applied to both the public knowledge transmitted within the school as well as to the everyday knowledge the teacher and pupil have of the world beyond school. The collection type of curriculum would have strong framing and the knowledge offered to students would be determined high in the educational hierarchy. The integrated type of curriculum would have weak framing and students would be able to negotiate what knowledge was relevant and what they understood it to mean.

The Collection Type of Curriculum

Bernstein's hypothetical application of his theory to the English educational system develops further his thoughts on identity, socialisation, power, and control. He thought that the collection type establishes a strong identity in pupils at an early stage in education in relation to both subject specialisation and level of ability. For him, identity is built around a subject. This creates access to a particular path in education and so into a career. This type, he claimed demands loyalty to the subject. Changing subject identity is not made easy. Socialisation occurs in a way that reproduces the values of society and maintains social order and control. Identity is built upon accepted and established roles with well-defined pathways and hurdles controlling entry, as also described by Furlong and Cartmel's (1997) railway journey of transition to adulthood discussed in Chapter 4. There is little room for negotiation over where different knowledge belongs. The rules by which these arrangements have been made are hidden from the student and, often, the teacher. However, Bernstein claimed it is very clear what to do. Selection is arranged by assessment and directs students down particular paths; sciences or humanities for example. The same process determines the level at which they leave education, further determining what knowledge they hold and what identities through further education or work are available to them. This makes it easy for those who are successful to socialise with others of similar identities but not to encounter those on other pathways.

Bernstein (1996) thought there were a number of features of the collection type of curriculum in its relationship with the social world that affected the ways in which knowledge was or was not transferred. He speculated that the strength of the boundary between educational knowledge and everyday knowledge results in everyday knowledge being left in the private world of the individual. This, he thought, has its advantages. In particular, he claimed it would allow for a range of ideologies to be held. In his view society is dominated at any one time by one ideology that is subject to being maintained or transformed by each generation. However, with the strong framing and classification of the collection type of curriculum, other ideologies could develop outside the public educational space. These he thought were beyond the control of the established power holders in society. However, private knowledge would be given considerably less significance in the public identity of the person. Bernstein claims that this is problematic with regard to young people for whom learning and ideological beliefs have been significantly influenced by experiences in the everyday world. He suggests that this was because school knowledge developed by a collection curriculum is esoteric and special. Non-school knowledge is thought of as ordinary and of less value. This, he thought, would have a particularly 'wounding' effect for those who are not successful within this educational system. They would not have the other sources of knowledge available to them valued by the processes of finding further training or work and so an identity.

Of those that do find an identity within the system only some [43% in England in 2006 (Department for Education and Skills, (2007))] reach university. Bernstein argued that knowledge is treated in a shallow way. By this he meant that knowledge is shared with students in a hierarchical manner. At the base of the process knowledge is offered as truth about the world. Critical thinking or diverse points of view are not encouraged by this approach. Only if they are successful in reaching the top of the system do students understand that knowledge is mutable; the frames are weakened and they are offered the chance to engage in creative thought. As he put it, it is only at this stage that the student is introduced to the 'ultimate mystery of the subject, (its) potential for creating new realities' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 213). For most people knowledge remains understood as fixed and unchanging. It is owned by the subject specialists and imparted cautiously on the achievement of certain well-established standards. The educational relationship is ordered and hierarchical and the pupil has few rights. Access to knowledge has to be earned.

Many, Bernstein suggested, do not succeed in establishing an identity by this means and so are judged to fail and so are 'wounded' by the system. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 they then struggle in their process of identity building and socialisation.

The Integrated Type of Curriculum

The integrated type of curriculum is one in which Bernstein describes the contents as 'in open relation to one another' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 205). By weakening the boundaries of knowledge teachers are able to cross subject boundaries, that is weaker classification; and break down the boundaries between different school knowledge areas and between school and everyday knowledge, that is weaker framing. He believes that weaker boundaries allow for an emphasis to be placed on the process of education and not the content; a further example of weaker framing. As a result Bernstein thought that hierarchical relations break down, there is a shift in the balance of power between teacher and student, and curricula become negotiable between the student, the teacher, and the community. The authority and order bestowed by the strongly classified and framed subject has gone. Knowledge is discovered or co-constructed as well as imparted. Its relation to other knowledge as well as its meaning and value is negotiable.

Bernstein claimed that an integrated curriculum would require an idea that holds together the diverse elements of the content, a 'supra-content concept' (p. 217) as he called it. I would suggest that ecology is a good example of a new term that emerged to embrace a body of knowledge previously thought of as strongly bounded in different subject disciplines. Arguably, within the Stoneleigh Project, spirituality may be just such a concept. For this to be so, Bernstein argued, this concept would be conscious of and critical about the knowledges on which it draws. The partners in the Stoneleigh Group and the participants in the Stoneleigh Project openly widely and critically debated the meaning of the concept of spirituality. The value of different sources of knowledge, experiential or institutional, formed a strong thread in this discussion. It also became a theme that I was asked to explore through the evaluation study. This included a study of the curriculum of spirituality and the pedagogy that supported it. The findings of this co-operative inquiry were reported at both conferences and debated at one of the Stoneleigh Group forums. Bernstein argues that the understanding of knowledge starts with an analysis of its deep

structure and includes the pupil in the process of developing and valuing knowledge. The underlying theory of learning would be group- or self-regulated rather than didactic. Teachers, he believed, would have to collaborate, changing the distribution of power between adults and making the process of teaching highly visible. The collaborative nature of the evaluative study, the explicit way spirituality was included in the retreat curriculum, and the participant-led experiential and social process of meaning making would suggest that spirituality within the context of the Stoneleigh Project fulfilled the criteria of a 'supra-content concept'.

Within an integrated curriculum, Bernstein believed that value is explicitly placed on the synthesis of knowledge. However, he thought that there are still rules guiding this synthesis but that these are implicit and take a good deal more effort to work out. Building identity and socialisation become harder tasks. Bernstein suggested that four conditions are necessary for the integrated type of curriculum to be successful. These are consensus about the integrating idea; explicit and coherent links established between this idea and the knowledge chosen for transmission; an egalitarian arrangement for managing the educational system; and an evaluation system that can embrace a diversity of outcomes and take the inner attributes of the student into account.

Bernstein believed the integrated type of curriculum leads to a tendency that reveals more of the private world of the individual to the public world; that is matters of values and attitudes. This, he suggested, creates new opportunities for control. Indeed, he thought this would have been the motive behind introducing this type of curriculum to students who are failing educationally within the collection type of curriculum. He feared that, just as students who have failed within the collection system defend themselves by distancing themselves from it, so they would defend themselves against the intrusiveness of the integrated curriculum.

According to Bernstein his theories support the concept that the collection curriculum maintains the established order as it facilitates little change. Power and control remain arranged as they have been. Bernstein speculated that society is experiencing a moral crisis

in the structures of power and principles of control. The change needed cannot, Bernstein believed, be easily achieved from a collection type curriculum that is designed to maintain the established order and authorities.

Bernstein saw these two curriculum types as a continuum. He thought that there was an encouraging trend in formal education towards a more integrated type of curriculum. However, as his studies continued into the late twentieth century he thought that this was complicated by a parallel trend to revert to collection types of curricula centrally controlled by the State.

Whilst it might seem counter to his arguments, Singh and Luke (1996) claim that Bernstein was critical of liberal education which he thought of as the driving force towards a more integrated model of education. He suggested it is a well-meaning ideology that has the effect of giving the appearance within an educational institution of egalitarianism but that, in effect, it acts to hide the reproduction of the dominant distribution of power. It can be argued that, for most of the young people involved, the Stoneleigh Project did uphold a myth of equality papering over the cracks of an educational form (Singh and Luke, 1996, p. xiii) that simply maintained or, at best, restored the situations of young people. However, for some of the young people involved in the Stoneleigh Project this seemed not to be the case. The situation appears more complex and there is evidence of a more radical outcome, at least for a small group. This is an important perspective to consider in the light of the Stoneleigh Group's claims for the Stoneleigh Project to be a radical and truly transformative approach to informal education. It will be returned to in Chapters 12 and 13.

The Stoneleigh Group's approach to informal education, on first acquaintance, would seem to be best described by the integrated curriculum model. The collaborative and equitable pedagogic practices that were reported and the diverse forms of knowledge that were involved in the programme fit well with an integrated model with weak boundaries between the 'subjects'. Additionally, the boundaries between the public world of education and the social and private worlds of the young people were also weak. Knowledge about

the private and social worlds of the young people was accepted as valid within the programme and valued, albeit confidentially in many cases, especially within the retreats. The meaning and value attached to the constructed and re-constructed self and social knowledge held by the young people was student-centred and individualised leading to changes in the lives of the young people largely understood as controlled by them. However, using these same criteria, it can also be considered to be founded on a liberal ideology in keeping with the liberal educational values of the educational charities involved as partners in the Stoneleigh Group (Leadership Trust, 2007; Rank Foundation, 2006; Wrekin Trust, 2005). The programme is then open to the critique of liberal education that Bernstein presents.

Nevertheless, following Bernstein's theories, an integrated programme would create several potential sites for the transformation, rather than the reproduction, of knowledge and values. The first is the process by which knowledge and values are acquired from the everyday world and are re-interpreted by the facilitators within the curriculum of the Stoneleigh Project. This process is discussed further below. Second is the discourse between the participants in which meaning is constructed and negotiated, and certain voices are given authority by the social learning process and others not. This could involve knowledge and values acquired from experience or abstract knowledge and values introduced by participants. A third site is created by the choices made by the young people in their communities as they act on the transformed knowledge and values they hold of themselves and the world they are in. The fourth potential site of transformation is the Stoneleigh Group's transmission of knowledge and values about its practices as an organisation to its partners and the institutions of youth work.

Each of these locations either reproduced or transformed what knowledge and values were available, what knowledge and values were valued, and what meaning these were given leading to a potentially different understanding of the self, the world the self was in, or the programme and the way it worked. At each of these points the meaning constructed had the potential to empower or constrain the participants or the programme. Paying attention to these sites of potential reproduction or transformation in the analysis will help address this research project's questions about the way knowledge, values and power worked within

the pedagogic practices of the case study. The degree to which this liberal education project achieved its goals or ‘papered over the cracks’ is considered in Chapters 13.

The Construction of a Pedagogic Device

Bernstein describes the task of creating a new educational programme as the creation of a new space in which knowledge and meaning can be negotiated. As discussed at greater length below, he thought that knowledge is recontextualised when it is disembedded from the real world context and located within an educational initiative. He cites the difference between carpentry and woodwork as an example (Bernstein, 1996, p. 47). Bernstein thought that this creates a space in which a discourse can occur about what knowledge is of value and what it might mean. The Stoneleigh Group deliberately created the Stoneleigh Project to provide a location for such a discourse to occur. The themes around which they set out to hold this discussion were the contribution of outdoor education to spiritual development, the nature of spiritual development in youth work, the role of spiritual development in enhancing the agency of young people, and the potential for educational programmes to support young people as agents of social change.

Bernstein pointed out that this discourse creates a space in which new understandings of knowledge and power can arise. For Bernstein discourse was not the content of the discussion but the process (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46-48). Students and teachers involved in the process of developing new educational initiatives have the potential to develop radical programmes that transform the understanding they have of the world. This he described as realising the impossible or in other words bringing new concepts of the self and the world into a person’s consciousness so that it opens up new possibilities. The Stoneleigh Group set out to create a programme in which marginalised young people would transform their concepts of themselves and the world that they were in so that they could consider new possibilities for themselves and for that world. However, the individual partners in the Stoneleigh Group also reinterpreted the intentions of the Stoneleigh Project to be congruent with their particular understandings of their work with young people. In some cases these reinterpretations limited or countered the transformative aspirations of the Stoneleigh Group.

Bernstein points out that, if these pedagogical spaces of discourse have the potential he claims for them then, as these reinterpretations by the partners in the Stoneleigh Group would indicate, the control of such spaces will be contested. The pedagogues of the Stoneleigh Project struggled to sustain the radical intentions of the programme from the recognised holders of power attempting to subvert or close the programme down so that the established order could be maintained rather than challenged. As described above, the Stoneleigh Group faced internal struggles over the interpretation of the work of the programme and further struggles occurred over its value during the advocacy work with the development of the national frameworks for a youth service curriculum. These struggles over the meaning and value of the Stoneleigh Project are discussed in Chapter 14.

Micro Level Applications

Bernstein's theories extend to models and concepts that help with understanding the development of pedagogic practices and the analysis of relations between what Bernstein termed the acquirers (the students) and the transmitters (the teachers) of knowledge.

Authentic Knowledge and the Construction of Curricula

Bernstein understood knowledge, whether the esoteric knowledge of abstract ideas or the everyday knowledge of personal and social life, as authentic when it is embedded in the skills and values associated with practice (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46). He understands these two aspects to be inseparable. Any skill, he holds, is embedded in and governed by regulative values. He gives the example of carpentry to illustrate his point describing how the functions of the tools are embedded in a discipline of values about how to look after and treat them (Bernstein, 1996, p. 47). However, when an educator disembeds this knowledge from the real world and reconstructs them in new relationships in what Bernstein calls the imaginary world of pedagogic knowledge, in this case the teaching of woodwork, a site is created in which the reproduction or transformation of the skills and values occurs. A further opportunity for change exists when the context in which this knowledge is to be applied is chosen. An example would be if woodwork were to change from a subject preparing a student for a career to one helping the student take up 'DIY' as a hobby.

An illustration from outdoor education would be the disembedding of climbing knowledge as a pedagogic approach from the real world of recreational climbing. Whilst much remains the same, a number of skills and values change such as single pitch climbing only, no leading, mandatory wearing of helmets, and other rules. The knowledge is transformed again when climbing is used in the context of personal and social education. Instead of learning to climb the activity becomes a means to develop attributes that have an application in the personal and social world of the student who may never climb again. In these changes the transmission of the rules of climbing that maintain established power relations might be reproduced, reinforced, or countered. One example might be the change in who it is that takes the role of securing the safety systems. The instructor will often rig the climb prior to the climbing session. The induction of a novice recreational climber into the skills and responsibilities of providing for the safety of the climbers is lost as the instructor assumes all the responsibility for this aspect of the experience. Another related example is the loss of the task of leading the climb. The novices in the educational context will rarely if ever experience the moment when they are judged competent to lead. What exactly takes place then will, Bernstein claims, depend on the ideology of the people undertaking the selection of knowledge and the development of the practice, in this case the instructor's views concerning acceptable levels of risk and where the responsibility for this risk lies.

For Bernstein an important aspect of the relationship between the educator and the student is that it should be a discourse (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46-48). The meaning and value of knowledge can be more or less questioned or transformed in the process by the teacher and by the student. It is also here that Bernstein believes the potential for change exists, that is whether a pedagogic practice reproduces or transforms the dominant power relations in society. In the example of climbing Bernstein's ideal could involve the students being invited to choose the climbs they would like to attempt and the people who hold their ropes and offer them advice and encouragement. Also what constitutes success could be negotiated. This is a useful concept with which to examine the pedagogic relationships within the Stoneleigh Project and the ways in which they maintained or transformed established relations of power and control.

The Recognition and Realisation of Knowledge

Bernstein's theories provide a framework for describing some of the problems to be encountered in the discourse between educator and student. Some, even many, students may recognise the knowledge as relevant or interesting to them; what Bernstein calls 'recognition rules'. Others do not. For example my own education at a boys-only school offered woodwork in which I was not interested and performed badly. I was transferred to cookery which, in the context of being brought up primarily by my mother who was a homemaker, I enjoyed and developed as a strong subject area. I recognised cookery but not woodwork as interesting, relevant, or comprehensible.

However, if students do not have the necessary realisation rules this knowledge may remain mute. By 'realisation' Bernstein means the competency or the inclination to apply this knowledge in the construction of a public identity by the choices of study and work that students make. Despite my interest in cookery at school, taking this knowledge forward into higher levels of education or thinking of it as a career never occurred to my teachers or me. Bernstein claimed that recognition and realisation rules determine whether and how we put meanings together and how we make them public. In other words, Bernstein is claiming that students may not have access to a body of knowledge for personal, social or intellectual reasons. Alternatively they may have a body of knowledge but they may not be able to give it a legitimate voice or text; some form of public expression. It is useful to note that Bernstein understands voice or text as any expression, posture, or movement, as well as words or images, that 'attracts evaluation' (p. 32).

Bernstein suggests that pedagogic practices can have a significant effect on the number of students who recognise the knowledge gained through an educational intervention. However, even if an effective pedagogic practice reaches more rather than less of the students despite the recognition rules they hold, the knowledge they gain may still be inexpressible within the educational context because of the realisation rules that affect them. Alternatively, it may be understood as knowledge of relevance only within educational life and not to the private, social, or public world in which the students live their everyday lives. This may provide an explanation for one of the dilemmas of outdoor education. Outdoor education offers novel experiences that, it could be argued, sometimes

bypass established recognition rules and so reach more students that understand it as offering an education of meaning and relevance. The truancy prevention programme that is mentioned in Appendix 3 might be a good example of this. However, outdoor education's acknowledged problems with transfer back to educational normality and everyday life (Rickinson et al., 2004) might stem from the strong sense of the experiences being beyond the normal everyday world. However, the truancy prevention programme provides anecdotal evidence that certain pedagogic practices can also have an influence on the realisation of knowledge in other areas, for example the ability to pass public examinations in English that were previously thought of as beyond the ability of the truanting students.

Bernstein suggests that evaluation rules, applied by the student, the educator, or society, may allow or disallow the student's emerging texts of the educational experiences and the growing identities these help to construct. By evaluation Bernstein meant the way in which the emerging identities of young people are valued and so endorsed or supported. This may be at personal, social, or public levels. He thinks that how well a voice is realised or given expression will depend on how congruent it is with the dominant ideology. The Stoneleigh Group set out to confront aspects of the dominant ideology as it was to be found in the communities of the young people. Bernstein points out that those who uphold the dominant ideology will contest sites of transformation such as this. The transfer of learning from the retreats to the voluntary work and beyond into the lives of the young people was indeed contested when it challenged the accepted conventions of the Stoneleigh Group partners and, in particular, through the advocacy role of the Stoneleigh Group, the institutions of youth work. The degree of congruence between the intentions of the young people after the Stoneleigh Project and the hopes of the Stoneleigh Group is explored in Chapter 13.

The Genesis of Values

Bernstein is concerned with the way in which knowledge and power interact in the formal education system. The Stoneleigh Group are concerned with values development in an informal educational context with older youth. Joas (2000) offers a theory of values development that, I argue, can complement Bernstein's theory.

Joas (2000) summarises his theory of values formation by stating that 'values originate in experiences of self-formation and self-transcendence' (p. 145). Joas understands values as 'goods', that is values that the person considers to be positive and that an individual identifies through experience. He claims they form the basis for a personal ethic. Joas thinks this process is critical for identity formation. He also recognises that individuals are situated in a cultural setting of an established 'right' set of values however this is defined or whoever legitimates this. Joas suggests this creates a struggle of '... relationship between experience of value and experience of the Ought, between values and norms, between the good and the right, between the individual as an autonomous being and the person offering solidarity to the collective' (p. 145).

Joas offers a resolution to this conflict between social order and the autonomous individual. He proposes that individuals do not need to do the good or the right thing. He takes a pragmatic view by suggesting they need to reconcile tensions between these two positions and find a way that works. This, he suggests, may later be rationalised by reference to goods or rights.

In a world in which identity is much more mutable and mobile than in the past, Joas suggests that situations increase in which people have to make pragmatic decisions that are self created and not defined by their allegiances. His ideas suggest that individuals need a deep knowledge of the 'good', as derived from experience by the self, and the 'right', as defined by the culture in which the individual is immersed, in order to make pragmatic decisions. They cannot act from a handed down rulebook, as particular situations do not always correspond to normative situations. This would be especially so for marginalised individuals who are excluded from the established means by which experiences of the 'right' are provided within the boundaries of normative identities. From an educational stand point, and drawing on Bernstein's models of curricula, the need for a deep knowledge of both the 'right' and the 'good' implies that values development in this context would work best in an integrated curriculum.

I suggest that making value judgements is doubly harder for the marginalised. They have experienced violent, as Joas characterises it, or wounding, as Bernstein described it, ways of identity construction. This happens, Joas suggests, in two ways. In the first instance an increasing number of young people are denied experiences of who they can be as they fail at the established hurdles of the institutions that provide a way of constructing an identity. Of relevance to this case study would be the family, school, further and higher education, religious institutions, and work. At the same time society offers a rejection based on the norms of what a person should be like that the individual has just failed. They are defined by what they are not; an experience that Joas considers to be one of violence perpetrated on the individual by society. This, he claims, occurs when the definition of identity by what one is not is out of proportion with definitions of what one is; that is young people experience themselves as misfits who are not wanted.

Joas (2000) applies his theory to organisations in society as well as individuals. The experiences of an organisation, he believes, help it to construct a set of collective social values that interact with cultural norms just as those of an individual would. This application of his theory is utilised when analysing the relationship of the Stoneleigh Group partners with each other and the relationship of the Stoneleigh Group with the wider world of youth work. Joas does not suggest what might happen when the cultural norms are perceived as wrong or bad and in need of revision. The Stoneleigh Group set out to tackle this very issue by seeking to create agents of change who would challenge the norms of society that are responsible for what the young people understand to be social and environmental injustices.

Joas identifies a dilemma that Bernstein also recognised; the degree to which public life should engage with the private world of the individual. Joas discusses Rorty's ideas that a coherent identity with a sustained set of values is only necessary in the public world and then only in relation to a minimal set of human values such as doing no harm to another (Rorty, 1989). In the private world, Rorty suggests, the individual should be liberated from social expectations of rights and goods. Instead of identity struggling to become coherent in relation to an increasingly diverse set of influences, it should, instead, seek to liberate itself from these expectations and celebrate the full range of beliefs and desires it is drawn

to, constructing and reconstructing the self in different situations and over time. Whereas Bernstein seems to share Rorty's concerns for the public world entering the private space, Joas (2000) suggests that the intersection of these two worlds is much messier than Bernstein's rather clear-cut distinction. Indeed he proposes that 'goods' arrived at in the private sphere of life of necessity interact with the norms of the public sphere of life in the resolution of particular actions. It is in this creative act, Joas believes, that the individual develops, and constantly develops, his or her identity.

By private and everyday Bernstein (1971) means the non-school world. For young people not in formal education part of this non-school world is a social and public space. This is especially true for the young people in the Stoneleigh Project who are engaged in social enterprises and the world of work as well as informal education. They are not in the same world as the school child. This creates the possibility of exploring values in a public space beyond the school and also of leaving the private world private.

In addition, from the point of view of young people in the Stoneleigh Project, the family can dominate their world. It is possible that social norms are less influential. Transforming dominant power relations and emerging from systems of control was highly significant to some of the young people but the source of the power and control that concerns them, and that was experienced as oppressive, was the family. Even the limited opportunities offered by the education, youth, or adult worlds to a marginalised young person without a strong emerging identity may be understood as a step forward on Furlong and Cartmel's (1997) car journey metaphor referred to in Chapter 4.

Joas (2000) makes the distinction between the processes of developing values with the processes of helping students to act on their values. His view is that people need experiences through which to develop a transformative and transcendent sense of identity through encountering the other; people and nature. This he thinks leads towards a universal notion of values based on the human condition. People, Joas claims, then also need opportunities to apply these values to the everyday situations of their own culture and their own social worlds. These actions lead to interpretations of values that are particular and

diverse. This Joas understands as essential in the process of building and maintaining an identity that is sustained in space and time.

In Joas' language then the task of the Stoneleigh Project can be examined as an attempt to develop the values of young people or as an attempt to clarify and pragmatically recognise, realise, apply, and justify their values. From the point of view of Bernstein it can be examined as a task of helping young people to either recognise and realise their values or to express them in their personal, social and public lives. These potential sites for personal or social transformation are at the centre of the pedagogic practice of the Stoneleigh Project and can be examined with Bernstein's models to consider whether or not this potential was realised.

Conclusion

Youth work has always operated within the everyday world of people's personal and social lives and not in the educational world of what Bernstein refers to as esoteric knowledge. Nevertheless Bernstein's theories can still be relevant to the analysis of the Stoneleigh Project. As Bernstein (1996) states he thinks it is a theory that is helpful in exploring matters of power and control in all pedagogic relationships at micro and macro levels.

As argued in Chapter 5 the ideology of informal education has been one of the personal and social transformation of young people and this chapter suggests that this can be understood as Bernstein's integrated curriculum with weak frames and boundaries.

As also discussed in Chapter 5 Davies (1999) and Jeffs and Smith (2002) argue that the ideology of the Youth Service has been compromised. Through the Connexions Service it has been shifting towards a provision in which the boundaries are stronger and a curriculum and pedagogy are centrally established. This locates the Youth Service more readily within the collection system of education identified by Bernstein. As Bernstein suggests happened with schools in the 1970's this leaves integrated approaches as a means to work with marginalised youth, a task more readily performed by voluntary organisations outside of the state system, as this would avoid any conflict between the two approaches.

On the other hand outdoor education, which is also a pedagogic source of ideas for the Stoneleigh Project, would seem to offer a wider range of ideologies with both collection and integrated systems of knowledge. Collection systems are developed around specific activities and environments providing strong classifications and frames and so providing alternative ways to socialise and find an identity outside of school and work as well as effective ways to reproduce the norms of society. Physical education approaches to outdoor activity with a strong emphasis on the discipline of the sport would belong to this type. So might the didactic application of behavioural psychology proposed in Priest and Gass's (1997) adventure programming.

Integrated systems of outdoor education are also available, especially those that focus on personal and social development and student-centred experiential learning. Mortlock's (1984) ideas about the role of adventure and Hodgkin's (1976) concerns with the roles of playing and exploring would belong to this type. They emphasise present experience over historical reproduction, negotiate curricula and pedagogy; the teacher becomes a facilitator and less powerful and authoritarian. Meaning-making and knowledge construction are emphasised over the transmission of knowledge.

In Chapters 10–14 I draw upon Bernstein's theories of education to examine the ideas that underpinned the development of the Stoneleigh Project. They will also provide a framework for examining how these ideas were realised in practice and what the consequences of this approach were for the young people and their private and social worlds. Lastly Bernstein's theories enable a discussion of the struggle for the understanding of the Stoneleigh Project and the use of this knowledge in the advocacy work of the Stoneleigh Group.

Chapter 9:

The Ideologies of the Stoneleigh Group and its Partners

Introduction

As a pilot programme of informal education outdoors for young people the Stoneleigh Project set out to provide a programme that supported marginalised young people in becoming agents of social change with the intention of challenging the established social order. The Stoneleigh Group explicitly described the programme as spiritual development. This analysis of the Stoneleigh Project begins with a close look at the way in which the ideas for a radical and transformative project emerged and were variously understood by the Stoneleigh Group partners.

As described in Chapter 2 the Stoneleigh Project set out to be a radical intervention in the lives of marginalised young people. Its purpose was to support them in transforming their circumstances and in becoming agents of change tackling the social issues that the Stoneleigh Group partners thought were some of the causes of their marginalisation. To do this the Stoneleigh Project was designed to work with the young participants to develop their values in order to transform their emerging adult identities. Lastly, the Stoneleigh Project was designed to create opportunities for young people to engage with their worlds in ways that expressed their identities by tackling the issues that they thought were important.

It was not always clear what the Stoneleigh Group meant by a radical programme. At times the term was used in the context of the claims for transformative outcomes for the young people and the communities of which they were a part. At other times it was applied to the approach to informal education taken by the Stoneleigh Project, especially the retreats. This would sometimes refer to the content, particularly the idea of spiritual development, whereas at other times it would refer to the process, especially the way in which it was thought power and control were facilitated on the programme. It was also not clear what the different organisations in the Stoneleigh Group, or the Stoneleigh Group itself, meant

by transformation. The concept was variously applied by the partners in the Stoneleigh Group to the transformation of the young people's identities, the young people's circumstances, the social world of the young people, or the institutional world of youth work.

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify the ideologies and philosophies of the Stoneleigh Group and its partners. This will help with the understanding in later chapters of how these beliefs interacted; both between the partners in the Stoneleigh Group and with other youth work institutions. The retreats form a central focus in this research. This analysis will also provide a framework from which to consider the practice of the retreats. Did the Stoneleigh Group 'walk the talk' and in what way, if at all, can it be considered radical or transformative?

To help clarify the thinking of the Stoneleigh Group partner organisations and how these compared with the Stoneleigh Group itself, I have arranged the discussion in this chapter into three themes. These were central to the discussions held by the Stoneleigh Group as the Stoneleigh Project was being developed.

The first examines the Stoneleigh Group partners' concepts of youth and transition and how these developed to form the Stoneleigh Group's own concept of this process. This leads to a discussion of the Stoneleigh Project in the context of wider views concerning youth transition discussed in Chapter 3 and, in particular, the cultural and historical approaches taken by youth work outlined in Chapter 4.

Secondly, one particular issue dominated the developments within the Stoneleigh Group; the issue of marginalisation. I will consider the way that the Stoneleigh Group thought of marginalisation. In one sense the role of youth work was understood as to help young people transform themselves so that they could escape their marginalised circumstances. It was also discussed as a situation the Stoneleigh Group sought to transform through the efforts of the young people. Marginalisation was also considered by some partners in the

Stoneleigh Group to be a situation that motivated young people to become agents of change.

All the partners used work as a core context for their interventions with the 18 plus age group. The meaning of work is the third theme that I discuss. It is in relation to work that the Stoneleigh Project sought to support the transformation of the young people involved. It was seen as a device that would facilitate the transformation of the young people's personal circumstances as well as encouraging them to act as agents of social change.

In order to explore these themes I use evidence from early conversations, meetings, and papers. The approach I have taken to this evidence is historical. I have examined the evidence retrospectively, already knowing the themes that have emerged through this research. Important relationships, intentions, concepts, values and beliefs underlying the Stoneleigh Group stem from this early development work that will inform the later struggles that are discussed in Chapter 13.

For the Stoneleigh Project to be radical in approach, as defined by Bernstein (see Chapter 8.), it needed to address the inequity that the young people who participated had experienced in their personal, social, and public lives and not 'paper over the actual distributions of power' (Singh and Luke, 1996, p. xiii). Chapter 4 outlines the historical and cultural influences that have led to youth work seeking to address the inequities in the development of young people in all three of these aspects of their lives. Any claims made by the Stoneleigh Group for radical approaches and transformative outcomes could have an impact in any combination of these three areas; the personal, social, and public worlds of the young people involved. These are the subjects of Chapters 10 (in which I will explore in what ways the Stoneleigh Project's retreat programme could be understood as radical), and 12 (in which the degree to which young people were transformed, in what context, and if this had radical elements within it, will be discussed).

Youth and Transition

Evidence concerning the beginning of the Stoneleigh Group is patchy. My involvement as a researcher and evaluator did not begin until the first Stoneleigh Project was underway. However, during 1998 and 1999 I met regularly with one of the founders of the Group, Colin of the Rank Foundation, to discuss his work. During some of these meetings he discussed with me his emerging ideas about what was to become the Stoneleigh Group and I made contemporaneous notes of two of these meetings. Other evidence comes from minutes and papers from early meetings and the recollections of those involved and noted at the time or documented later in interviews.

The following indented text is a summary of my notes from meetings held with Colin in 1998 and 1999. The purpose of these meetings was to help Colin think through his ideas. My role was to help him critique and develop his thoughts including providing him with a theoretical and empirical underpinning for the ideas he was trying to articulate for his trustees.

Colin did not understand the period of youth as a time of transition but as a time of life with its own merit. My notes describe his position.

He was passionate about the potential of young people. He saw them as a source of critical reflection on society and he felt they were a major opportunity for the development of new values. He claimed these views were largely based on an experience he had had with ‘a group of young Rank ‘gappers’ on a weekend retreat’ at his invitation. What he saw as ‘their passion and vision for a better world’ impressed him... Further, he thought that it could be a time of action of benefit to the young person and to society. He believed the critique of the young was something the adult world should value rather than tolerate or ignore.

[N-C01(0198), N-C01(0299)]

‘Gappers’ is a term used to describe the young people on long term volunteer placements of up to nine months in voluntary organisations that the Rank Foundation supports (Rank

Foundation, 2006). The retreat mentioned was held to explore concerns Colin had with the trajectory of these young people after their gap schemes had concluded. He felt they were not building on their gap experience in ways that he had hoped. He described in one meeting how he had hoped their energy would carry them beyond the gap scheme into values-based environmental or community projects but this was not turning out to be the case. From Colin's perspective the development of the privately held beliefs of young people should not be retained within the social world of youth but should have an expression within the public adult world. This he thought could take place through meaningful work that challenges the social values regarded by young people as in need of change.

The organisations that came to comprise the early Stoneleigh Group held different views to Colin concerning the period of youth. Instead of a time during which young people are tolerated or ignored, they thought of it as a problematic time of risk as well as a time of opportunity and possibility. They understood young people to be the victims of the ills of society rather than the potential to address those ills. This is reflected in their statements of purpose (see Appendix 4). For example Eden Community Outdoors state that the 'community does not know how to support young people...' (Civic Trust, 2006). The period of 'youth' is also understood by them to be partially lacking in forms of institutional support and increasingly negotiated by young people for and between themselves. Weston Spirit claim there is a 'lack of opportunity and poverty of aspiration' (Weston Spirit, 2006) and the Prince's Trust believe 'the difficulties many young people face are complex and interconnected' (Prince's Trust, 2006).

For all the Stoneleigh Group partners, youth work is understood as a means to support those that are marginalised or vulnerable during this time. For example Endeavour Training state they work for 'young people especially hard to reach groups, those 'at risk' of exclusion, and those already on the edges of society' (Endeavour Training, 2006). These shared ideas were reflected in the first collective expression of the Stoneleigh Group's beliefs:

A rich ‘youth’ culture occupies these transitional years and, in part, attempts to compensate for this extended youth role. Identity is built around music, fashion, transient relationships, consumption, education and leisure. Purpose can be provided by travel, studying, relationships and social action. However, the complexity of the modern world coupled with the reduction in the strength of many communities can leave some young people abandoned, vulnerable and open to exploitation. In these circumstances youth work provides a handrail and a safety net. Also, in order to discover their role within their community, they need an engagement with adult role models both during this phase and in transition from it.

[R-SG(1100)]

The partners in the Stoneleigh Group held a shared view that the duration of the time of youth has recently been extended and is a time of transition. In part, there is a correlation between the views of the Stoneleigh Group partners and Furlong and Cartmel (1997) that social institutions have yet to identify and provide for the needs of young people post-18. The notion of ‘compensation’ in the quotation above is interesting. It implies a lack of something resulting from the emergence of an extended period of youth. Although several potentially enriching aspects of culture are identified as a result of this new stage in life, unlike Colin, these are not always seen as a gain for young people or society. Rather, they are thought of as preparing, marking time, or compensating, for something else that is understood as more significant; the world of work and adulthood.

The Stoneleigh Group’s early views echo the time of transition from youth to adult as being like Furlong and Cartmel’s (1997) metaphor of a car journey discussed in Chapter 4. They also claim, in contradiction to their ideas of youth culture as partly a compensation for a delayed adulthood, that the extended period of youth has an essential purpose. This, in their view, involves the exploration of several trunk routes, by-roads and blind alleys in order to find a place for themselves away from the view of adults.

During this time young people need to explore and experiment, reject the norms of society and the oppression of adults and seek out spaces and roles in which they can express their individual talents and beliefs.

[R-SG(1100)]

Nevertheless the first quotation above from this report infers that the Stoneleigh Group think that young people find some adults less oppressive than others. They are seen as having a significant role in helping young people address issues of abandonment and vulnerability, overcome the violence of rejection, and avoid exploitation by providing 'a handrail and a safety net'.

The journey, despite its unpredictable and variously valued paths, has, in the minds of the Stoneleigh Group, a clear destination. In a statement in their paper that introduced the Stoneleigh Project to new participants and organisations the Stoneleigh Group described the needs of young people as they saw them.

Making the transition from youth to adult has always been difficult. Some of the milestones - to worker, parent and homemaker, for example - have been delayed. Others have been marginalised. Those that remain are often entered into without the intergenerational guidance they require to be effective.

[R-C05(1000)]

However, as research conducted by one of the Stoneleigh Group (Prince's Trust, 2004) indicated, despite the 'rich youth culture' there is no doubt that in the view of the members of the Stoneleigh Group, for some young people, this is a difficult time. It is a time understood by young people as well as by their communities, youth work professionals, and social policymakers, as a time with the potential for serious negative consequences.

Several interesting differences of view were present from the foundation of the Stoneleigh Group. Whilst the period of extended youth was understood by all of the organisations as

sometimes problematic there were different views about exactly what the problem was (see Appendix 4). For some it was centred on the way in which young people and the time of youth were understood. Another perspective held that families, schools, and communities had variously let young people down in their earlier development. For others the problem was the duration of the time of youth or the nature of the opportunities within this period. For yet others it was the lack of adult involvement during this period, especially the lack of an informal education service to provide a handrail, in particular for those experiencing problems.

Nevertheless, all the organisations forming the Stoneleigh Group also saw the extended period of youth as an opportunity (see Appendix 4). This opportunity was understood by some to be a chance to discover individual potential. Others thought of it as a time to explore possible identities through a range of social networks and projects. For others it was an opportunity to develop a critique of aspects of current social norms.

As the Stoneleigh Group established itself the vision was wavering between three approaches. The first was an approach that understood young people as Colin's motivated young people of 'passion and vision' 'of benefit...to society' [N-C01(0299)] and the time of youth as a period during which young people could use this energy and commitment to address the problems of society. The second, held by the voluntary youth work organisations, understood the target group to be those finding the transition to adulthood difficult. For them the aim of the programme was to help young people address these problems and to support them in realising their potential in their personal, social and public lives. A third view can be seen emerging from within this discussion in which Colin adapted his initial position in order to work with the voluntary youth organisations attracted to exploring their idea of spiritual development within youth work. This view understood youth as a time of transition during which young people could tackle both the problems they were encountering in this process of transition and the causes of the problems that they faced.

In all three cases, whether in the context of ‘motivated’ or ‘marginalised’ young people, the time of youth was understood as problematic in all three of the areas of concern of their personal, social, and public lives. In addition, young people were thought of as experiencing problems in these areas rather than causing them. Also, in all three cases, young people were understood as the agents of the change believed necessary to tackle these problems, whichever they were. It was around these understandings that the potential partners in the Stoneleigh Group developed their common ground.

Marginalisation

The young people that became the participants in the Stoneleigh Project were understood by the organisations working with them as marginalised. From Colin’s original position all young people are marginalised to some degree; tolerated or ignored but not supported or listened to until they adopt an adult identity and so engage with the adult world. Colin thought these issues had root causes in the nature of modern society. He had set out to enable young people to tackle these issues that he felt he and they intuitively grasped. Colin’s early vision was of ‘a process that would support young people with a passion for change in identifying their strengths and values and supporting these into action in the world’ [N-C01(0299)].

Colin offered an optimistic view of the capabilities of young people to transform their worlds. This view has some similarities with Bernstein’s (1996) definition of personal enhancement.

I see ‘enhancement’ as a condition for experiencing boundaries, be they social, intellectual or personal, not as prisons, or stereotypes, but as tension points condensing the past *and* opening possible futures. Enhancement entails a discipline. It is not so much about creativity, although that may be an outcome; enhancement has to do with boundaries and experiencing boundaries as tension points between the past and possible futures. Enhancement is not simply the right to be *more* personally, *more* intellectually, *more* socially, *more* materially, it is the right to the means of critical understanding of new possibilities. I want to suggest that this right is the

condition for *confidence*. Where the right is not met then neither students nor teachers will have confidence, and without confidence it is difficult to act.

(p. 6–7)

Bernstein held that it is possible to provide experiences that create critical understanding of the situation a person is in from a structural point of view and that these can be transformational. However, he argues that this transformation should not be understood as to do with the pursuit of ‘more’ but of an awareness of the possibility of difference. Bernstein argued that such an understanding would create new possibilities even though it would create an awareness of the structural constraints on the developing identity of the young person.

Colin’s vision can also be compared with Bernstein’s (1996) third right for participation in society. For Bernstein this was ‘... not only about discourse, about discussion, it is about practice, and a practice that must have *outcomes*. It is the right to participate in the construction, maintenance and transformation of order’ (p. 7). For Colin the young people he spoke with held values that he understood as transformative if only they could get beyond the stage of ‘discussion’. Colin thought that young people were resonating with a time of change in UK culture that he also perceived, and he believed in them as more than a conscience for the culture but as potential agents of change. His frustration was that society did not provide a means by which young people could readily build identities around such values.

Colin was aware of the problems young people were encountering in constructing meaningful identities. However, in his view, the problem lay in the incongruence between the emerging values of the young people he was working with in the gap scheme and the values of the society with which they were attempting to engage. He wanted young people to hold on to their values and to find or construct meaningful spaces in the adult world for them to be expressed. He thought of this as a good for society. Whereas Bernstein thought that education, at best, currently develops a ‘conforming but flexible man’ (p. 225), Colin,

like Bernstein, believed ideologically in an education that would create a radical and flexible person.

Colin's support for the introduction of a more radical education can be understood as a response to some of the recent changes that he believed should have an influence on adult identity. For him this identity is not constructed solely around family and work. It should have a wider relationship with society and its social and environmental values that are partly met through social and working life but in Colin's vision, should also be met through an engagement with a wider civil society. However, he also thought that the ways in which young people can match their emerging values with the adult world they are entering are poorly developed. Work is often thought of as meaningful only in that it creates a means to access resources to support family and private life; a false transformation through 'more' of things as Bernstein described it. This other life is not, in his view, a useful context for expressing values with political or social implications. Desires for changes are in this way, he believed, thwarted. What he believed was needed in order to support young people in the expression of their values was a new attitude to work or a wider engagement with the public world through civil life.

Colin's views of the significance and potential of young people as agents of social change were shared by two of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group, Eden Community Outdoors ['... reconnects the community with the energy of young people and the value of meaningful work' (Appendix 4)] and the Wrekin Trust ['...to develop as conscious instruments for creative change' (Appendix 4)]. However, the idea of 'marginalisation' was understood differently by most of the other members. For them it referred to those young people at risk or actually encountering considerable problems in preparing for or building an adult identity. The causes of marginalisation were variously cited by the members of the Group (see Appendix 4) as inappropriate parenting, education, or work opportunities (Arthur Rank Centre, Endeavour Training, The Prince's Trust), failing communities (Eden Community Outdoors, Mobex) or risky distractions such as substance abuse (Endeavour Training, The Prince's Trust).

Whatever the social influences on their pathways to adulthood, the Stoneleigh Group partners thought of the young people they worked for as disempowered or marginalised by their failures at school and in the work place (The Arthur Rank Centre, Endeavour Training, Mobex, The Prince's Trust and Weston Spirit). For example Endeavour Training describes their target young people as 'disaffected or excluded' and the Prince's Trust as 'struggling' or 'in trouble'. This sense of failure was also understood to extend to family and social situations (Endeavour Training, The Prince's Trust, Weston Spirit). However, the responsibility for these failures is largely placed on society for an inadequate education or inappropriate work opportunities. The Stoneleigh Group partners thought of modern society as providing a range of benefits that are the milestones of adulthood - work, parenting, and home, from which marginalised young people were excluded and to which they could be helped back. Whilst Colin's vision of transition can be described as an alternative path the other members of the Stoneleigh Group held an idea of transition more in keeping with Bois-Reymond and Blasco's (2003) yo-yo transition.

Bernstein (1996) described the process by which a student is able or not to respond to the knowledge that is being offered by society through pedagogic systems as 'recognition rules' (p. 31–33). He quoted research by Holland (1981) and Whitty, Rowe and Aggleton (1994) that highlights the way in which these rules function to maintain the established distribution of power in society by excluding young people from certain social backgrounds and from the privileges of knowledge. This was understood by the Stoneleigh Group partners as a significant factor behind the marginalisation of some young people. For example the Prince's Trust seek to support 'those who've struggled at school' (see Appendix 4). Eden Community Outdoors also wish 'to support young people who fail at mainstream education' (see Appendix 4). The Arthur Rank Centre are also specific about what they think is the cause of the marginalisation of the young people they support by identifying 'the shift from vocational to academic education for practically inclined young people' (see Appendix 4).

Bernstein also identified that knowledge may be acquired but that rules also exist that control the expression of this knowledge, for example in examinations or in pathways of further and higher education to work roles. These he called 'realization rules' (p. 31–33)

and he also considered them to be constructed in such a way as to maintain the established distribution of power. As will be discussed later, many of the young people who were participants in the Stoneleigh Project ‘succeeded’ at school and even entered university. They then struggled with various issues including the dislocation they felt from their family and social roots. Hess (1995) highlights the role of dislocation as a factor in the development of psychosocial disorders in young people. In particular she identifies moving, divorcing, remarrying and leaving or entering work as significant stress factors. In these cases social mobility, perhaps in part encouraged by some of the family factors identified by Hess, led them to drop out of work or higher education, accept work that did not match with their educational achievements or aspirations, or stay unemployed. This may be an example of Henderson, Holland, McGrellis, Sharpe and Thomson’s (2007) concept of downward mobility discussed in Chapter 4. However, the situations described above suggest that the causes of this mobility are not a lack of educational opportunity but rather a feeling that the newly acquired ‘recognition codes’ created a social and, sometimes, geographical distance between the young person and their traditional social context giving them a sense of dislocation and alienation. Using Bernstein’s analysis discussed above this can be interpreted as instilling a lack of confidence. However, it has been brought about by an undesirable outcome rather than an unattainable one.

Colin proposed another interpretation of this problem. In his view some of these young people had developed radical value systems through their educational and life experiences. Pathways to adulthood available in the wider world did not, in his view, reflect the knowledge they sought to realise. In other words it was not, in Colin’s view, the education that was unattainable but appropriate work opportunities post-education. If this is so it is not a failure of pedagogic systems to make knowledge available. It suggests a weaker framing of a curriculum for which the young people do possess the recognition rules.

Goffman’s (1968) concept of stigma may also be a factor in the response of these socially mobile young people to their situation. He discusses the way in which stigma, which he understands as a disempowering aspect of the social process of identity construction, can be attached to a person who is perceived as different. Young people in the process of socially mobile transitions run the risk of being stigmatised by the family and community

that they are leaving behind, a situation that may well describe the experience being discussed here. In these cases the young people are alienated from the social context of their adolescence. Whilst this can be understood as creating the potential for more fluid forms of social capital at the same time they also lose a significant aspect of this capital so weakening their situations. They could also feel alienated by those in education responsible for enabling the social mobility. As a consequence the pathway before them may become unattainable or undesirable and so it could be argued these young people become part of the 40% 'going nowhere' (Bynner et al., 2002).

For some young people, education, in its widest sense, has been capable of providing knowledge with the potential to be transformative in a political sense. Colin thought that gap years and social projects for 'gappers' might provide an additional educational pathway to facilitate the process of realising these radical values in action. However, he claimed to be disheartened by the lack of transfer of these values by the young people from their gap schemes into the next steps in their lives. It was as though the schemes acted as a safety valve with no real impact on the established culture, a 'papering over the cracks' as Singh and Luke (1996) would suggest.

Re-engaging young people who have been marginalised by the educational system and so understand it, and the adults who represent it, as harmful and to be avoided has been a long-standing challenge for the informal education approach of the youth services. Bernstein claimed that the impact of recognition and realisation rules would result in marginalised young people who would then reject the adult world. Young people in this situation, he thought, would reject parents and other adults seeking to help them. Trust in adults, especially those representing established institutions such as education, is widely regarded as a central problem for youth workers operating in this field (Prince's Trust, 2004). The analysis of thinking about youth culture that was discussed in Chapter 4 argued that this then emphasises the importance of youth culture in helping young people find an identity. This, it is suggested, will sometimes be an identity that is not only marginalised but also dysfunctional from the perspective of an adult society and potentially deviant and harmful to the young person, or criminal.

The majority of the voluntary youth organisations involved in the Stoneleigh Group worked to redress these problems by restoring the trust of young people in certain adults who can then work with them to rebuild their identities and find the skills that can return them to a path that leads to work and a healthy engagement with mainstream society (see Appendix 4). However, their approaches did not set out to foster critical awareness of the social and economic factors that were thought of as the causes of the problems faced by young people. It could be argued that their approaches can be summed up as attempts, often they would claim successful, to provide alternative recognition and realisation rules for an education that restored young people to a conventional situation that re-asserted the established distribution of power. The concepts of work held by the Stoneleigh Group partners and their meanings in society are discussed further below.

Neither did the Stoneleigh Group partners deliberately set out to support young people holding more radical views of society to find meaningful roles within it. Transformation achieved by fostering critical awareness that, as Bernstein would have described it, goes beyond a discourse and leads to ‘a practice’ emerged as a distinctive element of the Stoneleigh Group championed by Colin and two of the partners. This is also discussed further below.

Marginalisation as a Structural or Network Problem

The issue of marginalisation is thought of by the Stoneleigh Group members as partly structural in origin. For example in The Prince’s Trust report (2004) class, gender, age, ethnicity, and ability in particular are identified as potential barriers to educational, housing, and work goals. However, the Stoneleigh Group members also interpret these issues from the position of social networks. From this perspective they claim that the weak, chaotic and strong networks, as outlined in Chapter 4, can work to inhibit or restrain young people from new and transformative trajectories. These networks can be, for example, educational institutions, faith institutions, youth clubs, families, peer groups, or communities.

Whilst Bernstein claims that his theories can apply to a range of pedagogic relationships his analysis views the state and its institutions as the dominant source of established and potentially oppressive order. Bernstein claimed that this works to a large degree to maintain the structural inequities in society (Bernstein, 1996). From the perspective of young people who are post compulsory schooling the knowledge that helps or hinders them in acquiring identity comes from several sources. They are involved in several pedagogic relationships other than formal education; families, communities, religious institutions and peer groups can all have an influence. Some of these are, or can be, established institutions such as the church. Others are separate from institutions and the mainstream values of society such as peer groups.

The Stoneleigh Group partners thought that, from the perspective of young people, these other influences on their senses of themselves are significant and powerful, offering an alternative and potentially different source of knowledge about themselves and the world they are in. This relates back to the idea of youth being a time of compensation noted above. These other sources from which to construct an identity were thought of by the members of the Stoneleigh Group as often being either diversions on the trajectory to adulthood or dysfunctional alternative pathways. Less often were they thought of as a healthy alternative path of transition or a source of alternative values.

The rhetoric of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group suggest that their strategies for challenging the marginalisation of the young people in their programmes are based on those concepts that interpret the world of the young person as a series of networks open to influence, development, and change. For example these strategies can be interpreted to include developing weak social networks or breaking away from strong or chaotic networks to build more fluid ones. Residential outdoor experiences are often described by the partner organisations in this light. For example Camas describe the intention of their outdoor retreats as to provide ‘visits both memorable and meaningful through discovery and recreation, laughter and conversation, peace and activity coming together in this beautiful place’ (see Appendix 4). Claims are made for the way in which the broadening of personal and social horizons allow young people to see themselves in a new light, break with dysfunctional or sterile networks, build new networks of support with adults and other

young people, and plan new trajectories. For example, and of special relevance to the Stoneleigh Project, Stoddart (2004) supports these claims in relation to the social capital of marginalised young people and experiences of outdoor education. Eden Community Outdoors, Endeavour Training, Mobex, The Prince's Trust, and Weston Spirit all offer such justifications for their outdoor residential programmes. For example Mobex state that they provide 'training and development programmes of outdoors, arts and environmental education (that) build confidence, awareness and teamwork skills and explore personal and social issues' (see Appendix 4).

In this context, support from the potential members of the Stoneleigh Group for an outdoor residential programme was relatively easy to establish. It would appear relatively normal to the voluntary youth organisations that were approached by the founders to offer a programme that set out to transform the social networks and self-images of young people. Designing a project that sought to transform the structural inequities that might be the cause of their marginalisation would, in most cases, be breaking new ground. However, for Camas, the host of the early retreats, this was typical of their approach to youth work. This is described by Camas as to do with 'issues of sustainability, peace and justice ... , both in the choice of groups that are encouraged to visit and in the everyday life of the centre' (Loynes, 2001).

Marginalisation and Bernstein's Criteria For a Just Education

The responses of the members of the Stoneleigh Group to marginalisation (see Appendix 4) can be considered using Bernstein's three educational rights for a young citizen (Bernstein, 1996, p. 6-7). The language of modern youth work presented in Chapter 4, and echoed by many of the Stoneleigh Group partners, talks about building personal capacity through personal development programmes. Brahma Kumaris, Eden Community Outdoors, Endeavour Training, Mobex, The Prince's Trust, and Weston Spirit all provide programmes described in this way (see Appendix 4). On the surface this could be understood as Bernstein's 'enhancement' which he thought of as focussed on the individual (Bernstein, 1996, p. 6). Bernstein argued that a critical understanding by the young person of the context in which the transition was occurring was a central aspect of the educational goal of enhancement. It would, he claimed, help young people to gain

some control over their pasts, challenge the pathways their trajectories were following and, at the same time, be realistic about the possibilities ahead.

The members of the Stoneleigh Group understood enhancement to involve compensating for learning difficulties or preferences (see The Arthur Rank Centre, Appendix 4), offering a second chance to acquire educational skills, knowledge and qualifications (all the organisations, Appendix 4) and building confidence and awareness (all the organisations, Appendix 4). The intention is that this would enhance a young person's potential leading to rediscovery (see Brahma Kumaris, Appendix 4), reconnection (see Eden Community Outdoors, Appendix 4), reaching potential (see Endeavour Training, Mobex, The Prince's Trust, Appendix 4) and gaining aspiration (see Weston Spirit, Appendix 4). The Stoneleigh Group partners thought of their role as providing young people with a critical awareness of themselves rather than of their situations. Providing knowledge and skills then supports this process of building and sustaining the emerging identities of the young people. This was thought to help them to recover self-respect and so reconsider their value in society and thus restore a trajectory to their transitions.

The goal of this aspect of the work of voluntary youth organisations is described by the Stoneleigh Group partners as gaining or restoring confidence (for example see Mobex and The Prince's Trust, Appendix 4). Bernstein (1996, p. 6-7) also thought that confidence was important. However, he understood it as an essential consequence of the right of enhancement being met rather than as a condition that could be restored on its own. All the partners in the Stoneleigh Group are aware that restoring confidence in young people, and the possibility of success in achieving a healthy adult identity in a risk society, is a challenging task. As Joas (2000) proposes and as has been discussed in Chapter 8, individuals forming identities in circumstances where they are rejected by the established norms of society and have a poverty of experience will feel that their underdeveloped identities are under attack. This violent definition, as Joas describes it, defines rejected young people as who they are not and he claims will lead them to be distrustful and defensive. They will, Joas states, avoid contact with the social world that has denied them an identity.

Addressing this exclusion from support is a central concern of all of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group. They all offer programmes that seek to address this consequence of marginalisation. They, therefore, also include elements in their programmes that address Bernstein's second principle of inclusion. Experiences are designed to 'engage young people in education, work and community life' (Endeavour Training, Appendix 4). The purpose of this is variously described as to 'feel valued' (The Arthur Rank Centre, Appendix 4), 'to rediscover ... goodness' (Brahma Kumaris, Appendix 4) and find 'meaningful work' (Eden Community Outdoors, Appendix 4). The partners provide one or more of the following interventions. They seek to support the social inclusion of young people by challenging the violent rejection they have experienced and by listening to their life stories and respecting them. In addition they provide opportunities for education and voluntary or paid work and, through association within and beyond the voluntary organisation, build social networks that will help them develop their leisure, social and working lives.

Bernstein's (1996) third right for a just education '... is the right to participate in the construction, maintenance and transformation of order. Participation, Bernstein claimed, 'is the condition for *civic practice* and operates at the level of politics' (p. 7). Bernstein places '*civic practice*' in italics to emphasise that, for this right to be met, the young person should be engaged in more than a discourse. This echoes his concern for an education that 'papered over the cracks' by giving the impression of something happening within the boundaries of education, that, due to strong classification, remained within those boundaries. It did not become a 'civic practice' within the community.

Mobex claim to help young people 'become active participants in their communities' and The Prince's Trust hope that the projects they offer will 'make a positive contribution to their communities and society'. Eden Community Outdoors, as well as The Prince's Trust, go further by claiming to help young people in the creation of new leisure, social, educational, or work opportunities. For example Eden Community Outdoors are described by the Civic Trust (2006) as working with young people to create a youth club, a circus skills training programme, an annual community street festival, a mobile youth service, an organic café, and a recycling co-op. Both organisations claim to support young people in

the creation of new opportunities on their own behalf and on behalf of their communities. ECO describe this as social entrepreneurship and use measures developed by the New Economics Foundation (Sanfilippo, 2006) to monitor their success. These include social indicators such as crime rates, vandalism, and truancy but also economic indicators such as conditions of employment, salaries, and tracking the turnover of money within the community, all enhanced by the activities of the young people involved in the ECO projects.

Some of these opportunities support young people in acquiring identities in a way that maintain, as I have described Bernstein calling it, the social order. Others, such as Eden Community Outdoors, set out to help young people transform their leisure, social and work opportunities, both for themselves and for other people in the community. The various ways that the members of the Stoneleigh Group understand work in relation to young identities is explored further below.

In Chapter 8 I used Bernstein's theoretical frameworks to interpret the assertions made by the Stoneleigh Group for the Stoneleigh Project as a radical intervention. However, the Stoneleigh Project was more complex than this suggests. The Stoneleigh Group developed the retreats in a way that was intended to be radical as understood by the Stoneleigh Group's ideology. Meanwhile each partner in the Stoneleigh Group offered voluntary leadership roles in line with their normal practices. Claims made for this part of the Stoneleigh Project as a radical outcome were made in the context of the ideology of the youth work organisation and not the Stoneleigh Group. The partners in the Stoneleigh Group expressed the radicalism of the breadth of intention and provision in two different ways.

Firstly, it can be argued that the claims made by some of the voluntary youth organisations were that their work was transformative because it helped young people find a new trajectory on the road map of youth transition. From the perspective of the social world and the world of work the claim is that young people can build new and healthy social networks and develop constructive identities. From the perspective of Bernstein's social

theory, whilst the young people involved may be understood to have transformed their situations and opportunities, they can be thought of as having maintained the social order through their actions.

Secondly, other partners in the Stoneleigh Group, such as Eden Community Outdoors, The Prince's Trust, and the Wrekin Trust, claimed that their programmes supported young people in becoming agents of change within the community, constructing and transforming their social worlds as well as themselves. Both of these actions are an equivalent to 'civic practice' as Bernstein would have termed it (Bernstein, 1996, p. 7). Chapter 12 will examine in what way the Stoneleigh Project and the work of the voluntary youth organisations were thought of as radical or otherwise by the young people who participated in the programme.

Not all the partners in the Stoneleigh Group claimed to be radical in relation to all three of Bernstein's rights of a just education; enhancement, inclusion, and participation. However, they all claimed that the Stoneleigh Project offered a distinctive approach to one or more of them. Breaking their claims down into these three areas will be useful when discussing the claims made for the Stoneleigh Project by the young people, and by the partner organisations, for a programme that was thought of by each member of the Stoneleigh Group as enhancing the radicalism of their provision.

The Concept of Marginalisation and the Stoneleigh Project

The Stoneleigh Group partners understood growing up as problematic. The nature and location of the problems of marginalisation and the ways the partners sought to address them continued to be understood in different ways. For some of the members, their roles were to address the problems young people are experiencing because of earlier difficulties in their lives. For others it was to address the problems young people were currently experiencing whilst trying to recover what the partners understood as a healthy trajectory. This may have been a set of problems located in the young people, for example poor literacy, lack of confidence, drug use and so on. Or, alternatively, it may have been problems located in the world with which the young person was attempting to relate; no

work opportunities or housing, poor social or medical support and so on. Lastly, Colin, supported by Eden Community Outdoors and the Iona Community especially, continued to advocate for the importance of tackling the causes of the problems on behalf of these and other young people.

Despite the variety of ways in which young people, their social worlds, and their problems were understood, phrases in the Stoneleigh Group literature such as ‘empowering young people to transform their own circumstances’ [CD-SG(5103)] could be interpreted by all the partners as supporting their way of seeing things. Such ambiguous phrases enabled all the partners to give their support to the developing Stoneleigh Project.

The Stoneleigh Group and the Meaning of Work

For the age group that was the focus for the Stoneleigh Group, preparing for work, being in voluntary or paid work, or creating new work opportunities were thought of by the partner organisations in two ways. In one sense they were part of the informal educational intervention they were providing. Work was used as the main vehicle through which young people in need of help were supported in their transition to adulthood. They were also understood as one outcome of a successful project. Obtaining work was seen as the most significant achievement of each organisation’s intervention with a young person and, as discussed in Chapter 3 and enlarged upon below, ‘sorting yourself out’ was seen as the best way to go about getting work. As voluntary work became a central aspect of the Stoneleigh Project it is worth exploring further the various understandings of work held by the members of the Stoneleigh Group.

The critical difference between the ideas held by the members of the Stoneleigh Group lies in the meaning and nature of the work rather than the idea of work as such. Eden Community Outdoors (ECO) state that their programme ‘reconnects the community with the energy of young people and the value of meaningful work’ (see Appendix 4). The Arthur Rank Centre was founded to provide young people of a practical bent with training in order to gain work in traditional agricultural and horticultural roles (Arthur Rank Centre, 2007). The Prince’s Trust, among other things, help train and finance young people to set

up their own businesses, seeing marginalised young people as a creative resource in job creation (Prince's Trust, 2006).

Whilst the Arthur Rank Centre might be seen as conservative in their approach compared with ECO and The Prince's Trust it can be argued that, in some respects, ECO has more in common with the Arthur Rank Centre than The Prince's Trust. Whilst The Prince's Trust would consider most vocational training, employment, or entrepreneurial activity as a successful outcome the other two organisations hold particular and related values about the nature of work.

In this comparison of the three organisations The Prince's Trust holds the most traditional set of values in relation to the meaning of work. The Prince's Trust (Prince's Trust, 2006) understand work as an important milestone in the transition to adulthood providing identity, meaning, status, engagement with the adult world, and the financial means to participate in a modern society. The Prince's Trust's business partners, who support their work with marginalised young people and young entrepreneurs, are large employers. The mentors who work voluntarily are young people themselves employed by these business partners and The Prince's Trust celebrates vocational training and employment, as well as business start-ups, as successful and worthwhile outcomes.

The Arthur Rank Centre (2007) believes that the nature of work and education in a modern society alienates and excludes certain young people who are more suited to practical and manual tasks. They understand the world of work as one in which knowledge and intellectual skills are the main route to employment and so privileging those people who are intellectually capable. They seek to restore the opportunities for traditional forms of rural work. They also seek to restore a value to this kind of work in order that it is understood as dignified and worthwhile [R-SG(1100)].

ECO, on the other hand, set out to support marginalised young people in developing what they considered to be new and meaningful work [I-S01(4403)]. The Stoneleigh Group came to regard ECO as the most radical organisation [R-C05(7404)]. This claim was

founded on the Stoneleigh Group's understanding of radicalism as supporting young people as change agents in the community. Radical, from this perspective, meant a programme that transformed the individual, the social networks within which the individual lived, and the community, through the actions of the individual. From the perspective of Bernstein, this would be a claim that the pedagogic rights of enhancement, inclusion and participation discussed above were being met in such a way that all three were transformative experiences.

In this regard it is interesting that ECO claims it has the least reliance on public funding to carry out its work.

Public funding involves demonstrating the achievement of success criteria such as reductions in health or behavioural issues or increases in educational or employment take up. We do not want to be tied in to funding that defines the length of our programmes, what we can do, who we can do it for and what should be the outcome. We want people who fund our work to ask the young people we work with what they need and for them to be happy to support these. We would also prefer that this funding comes from local benefactors. We think a community should invest in the development of its own young people in a way that works for this community and this bioregion.

[I-S01(4403)]

Their view resonates with the criteria Bernstein offered for an integrated curriculum. Liz, a youth worker with Eco, described it as important that the control ["framing" in Bernstein's terms (Bernstein, 1996, p. 26-28)] of the programme was in the hands of the young people involved and the power ["classification" (Bernstein, 1996, p. 19-21)] over what knowledge and skills should be developed in order to achieve which projects was also determined by the young people. The youth workers' roles were to accompany the young people in achieving these aims. I would argue that Bernstein would describe this as weak classification and framing and so he would call it an integrated curriculum (Bernstein, 1996, p. 28-29). As Bernstein suggested that weak classification and framing are necessary

for the boundaries between an educational project and the social world to be weak, this suggests one explanation for the claims made by ECO to be effective in working with young people to transform their community.

When ECO was founded the leaders did have their own visions for the organisation. They imagined and hoped it would develop projects such as organic farming [I-S01(4403)]. When young people were consulted, what emerged were projects rooted in environmental values but that also had much stronger social dimensions; a recycling project, a summer outdoor adventure play scheme, an organic café, a backpacker's hostel with a housing scheme attached, an annual seasonal festival, a market stall selling wood carving, and an eco-bus providing youth services to isolated rural communities [I-S01(4403)].

One difference in the approach taken by the young people of ECO is that they were directing their working lives whilst the young people from the Arthur Rank Centre were employed labour. Perhaps the key distinction from the point of view of this thesis is that the Arthur Rank Centre wished their young people to be valued whereas ECO, whilst also wanting their young people to be valued, understood their young people as valuing. ECO also believed that the latter had the power to be transforming for both the young people involved and the community within which the work was undertaken.

What ECO and the Arthur Rank Centre have in common is a value placed on work in relation to the land and to a community. Spretnak (1997) an advocate for the values of the Craft Movement and, in particular, what she claims to be that movement's environmental ethics, would concur with this 'resurgence of the real'. She understood approaches that were in step with the values of the Craft Movement as countering all that she saw as wrong with work in the context of modernity; a set of values she describes as 'hypermodern' (p. 222). She argues for a restoration of work that values the body, a sense of place in the landscape and a place in the community; a set of values she describes as 'non-modern' (p. 27). However, she does not promote a return to a 19th century agricultural society. Like ECO and unlike the Arthur Rank Centre, she is seeking a new solution to finding relationship in an individualised world, a resolution that retains as many of the gains of

modernity - democracy, education, longevity, leisure time, etc.; a resolution she describes as 'truly post-modern' (p. 223). This, Spretnak believes, could draw on the non-modern values of the Craft Movement although she claims that these values need a new interpretation of the nature of people, community, and the meaning of work. The values of ECO could readily be understood as one such re-interpretation.

The Prince's Trust, on the other hand, value work in its 'hyper-modern' context and do not question the underlying values of the current form of capitalism or the systems of production and consumption that support it. Transformation for them concerns the changes in the personal circumstances and opportunities available to the young people and not changes in the world of work with which they are engaging. 'Persuading you he isn't just a useless troublesome waster isn't the problem. It's how do we persuade him?' (Prince's Trust, 2006) However, they do acknowledge that patterns of work are changing and that young people can become entrepreneurs able to create new types of work, are part of the way in which the work of the future will be constructed [R-SG(1100)].

Clearly, within the Stoneleigh Group member organisations, there were significantly different understandings of society and the relationship of young people and voluntary organisations to that society. The Prince's Trust represented a philanthropic approach committed to tackling marginalisation, with a strong belief in the capabilities of young people to transform their own circumstances. It acknowledged the changing nature of society and yet was uncritical of the society in which this occurs. The Arthur Rank Centre was critical of the way in which modern society marginalises certain groups of young people and sought to restore traditional forms of work and social life that countered these alienating trends. ECO was critical of the alienation of modernity and the consequent exploitation of people and nature. It sought to transform society through the work of young people who had become critically aware of the society in which they lived. All three organisations mediated, on behalf of their young people and according to their own ideology, the spaces in the adult working world with which the young people engaged. They sought congruence between the values they espoused about the social world and the adult world they were acting for as a gatekeeper.

The Arthur Rank Centre can be thought of as seeking to provide a pathway to an adult working identity based on what I would argue Bernstein would call the recognition and expression codes that it thought were appropriate for the young people they worked for (Bernstein, 1996, p. 31-33). From the perspective of the Arthur Rank Centre it was not seeking to transform the young people. Rather, a curriculum was offered that it believed young people would find relevant and achievable. Nor was it seeking to transform work. The world of work was, in its view, in need of reform to suit the capabilities of the young people rather than transformation.

The Prince's Trust tackled the educational problems they perceived the young people they worked for as having. They sought to transform the young people they worked for by approaching them with educational programmes that the young people recognised as of value. They changed the pedagogic approach that would be familiar in a school so that the missed/failed curriculum of numeracy, literacy and other core and vocational skills were offered with recognition rules that they claimed worked for the young people. This, they believed, would provide a second chance for the young people to express themselves in finding work but within the traditional parameters of society. Once an education was acquired they believed that young people would have learned the expression rules necessary to restore them to a conventional transition to work and an adult identity.

ECO was working with both personal and social transformation. It developed new forms of work that were based on the values of social entrepreneurship with the environment in mind. These were inspired by the young people who were holding values that challenged the norms of work in their community as well as being concerned with issues of social and environmental justice. Like The Prince's Trust, they also offered an alternative education that held recognition codes that were accessible to the young people. However, rather than understanding the outcome as the transformation of the young person, they sought to work with young people in order to transform the social and working world they were entering. ECO claimed that the young people were transformed not only by the educational programme but by the new opportunities then available in the wider community. As Liz put it

The young people in ECO want to challenge the situation that the only jobs they can aspire to if they remain here are to drive tractors or work supermarket checkouts. They did not drop out of school because they can't cope. They dropped out because they don't want to follow a path that leads to work like this.

[I-S01(4403)]

Most of the young people in ECO were truants from school or engaged in some form of home schooling or alternative education. Liz's remarks suggest that the young people understood the trajectory they were on and that, rather than failing at school, they resisted schooling because they did not want to follow such paths. They might have had the recognition codes but they had a critical capacity that the strong collection curriculum of school could not tolerate or that led them to be intolerant of school [I-S01(4403)]. Willis (1977) noted a similar rejection of authority and the formal process of learning to work amongst working class boys in school in the 1970's. He comments that their behaviours do, in fact, prepare them to cope with the kinds of work they are likely to get helping them to find meaning in and out of work through their resistance. Liz may have identified a similar trend but, in this case, amongst the middle classes as well as the working classes and amongst girls as well as boys.

Conclusion

In his thinking about what was to become the Stoneleigh Group Colin was building on a set of implicit beliefs about young people, their social world, and youth work. He believed youth is an expanded time of partial dependency and a relatively new phenomenon. Support for young people during this time was, he believed, inadequate. He thought growing up is more complex in a modern world and increasingly managed by the young person in a plural and more socially mobile world. In his experience young people held strong values but did not feel listened to. They felt impotent.

The emerging assertions of the Stoneleigh Group built on the beliefs of Colin. The Stoneleigh Group believed that the time of youth is increasingly problematic and that a growing number of young people are marginalised. They thought the problem was partly

about being valued as much as it was about having values. Whilst, in the partners' view, the problems were not of the making of young people they believed young people had the potential to tackle and even transform these problems for their own benefit and the benefit of their communities. However, they understood the public world as offering a narrow set of opportunities with limited potential for expressing a wider set of personal or social values.

In this respect, the Stoneleigh Group partners were particularly critical of the work available to young people seeing the knowledge society of late modernity as offering too few meaningful work opportunities for those not intellectually gifted or socially mobile. However, the partners took different approaches to tackle this issue, some more critical of society than others. This was significant because, for the target population of the Stoneleigh Group, supporting the transition to work involved creating volunteer work opportunities within the youth work of the members of the Stoneleigh Group.

All the members of the Stoneleigh Group understood themselves as working for the benefit of young people. However, under the influence of Colin, the Stoneleigh Group itself, through its emerging concept for the Stoneleigh Project, acquired a different intention that was considered by it to be more radical politically than the typical youth work of most of the partners. It became more than the sum of its parts. It set out to support or develop young people as agents of change who were capable of transforming both their own circumstances and those of their social situations.

Typically, in the hierarchical context of a collection type curriculum, young people are assessed for the identities that will best suit them (Bernstein, 1996, p. 28-29). However, the members of the Stoneleigh Group claimed that the young people were evaluating the educational programmes of the partners for their capacity to set them on pathways to adulthood that they, the young people, valued. In other words the young people were thought of by the partners as choosing their identities for themselves rather than allowing them to be determined by mainstream society. It is possible that, in some cases, this impression of agency was a significant motivating factor in the development of a young

person. However, in practice, the claims made for most of the programmes of the Stoneleigh Group partners described them as restoring the young people to conventional pathways from which the young people had been marginalised earlier in life. In many other cases it is probable that the personal and social worlds of the young people were transformed by the youth work of the Stoneleigh Group partners and that this enabled them to access pathways to adulthood previously unavailable to them. In both these situations the practices of the Stoneleigh Group partners, whilst restoring or transforming the young people, maintained rather than transformed the social order. In a few cases, notably ECO and, to some degree The Prince's Trust, claims were made that the social order was also transformed and by the efforts of the young people involved in the programmes.

The Stoneleigh Group set out to create a programme, the Stoneleigh Project, which specifically intended to support the development of young people as agents of social change. All the Stoneleigh Group partners subscribed to this purpose. However, the ideology on which this purpose was based, and that was applied by the Stoneleigh Group to the retreats, will be seen to interact variously with the ideologies on which the general programmes of each Stoneleigh Group partner were based, and which formed the other significant part of the Stoneleigh Project. This interaction will be an important theme of the remaining chapters as the meanings of transformation and radical practice are explored in the dialogue and practice of the Stoneleigh Group and its partners.

Chapter 10:

The Participants' Experience of the Stoneleigh Project Retreats

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the young people's experiences of the Stoneleigh Project retreat programme. In particular I focus on those aspects of the retreats that were thought to have an influence on the degree to which the young people were empowered to become agents of change in their lives. I consider whether the retreats supported them in the transformation of their identities and trajectories in their personal, social, and public lives.

Camas was the venue for the first retreats and so this chapter begins by examining the pedagogic approach of the centre. I start by exploring the backgrounds to the young people that were recruited to the Stoneleigh Project considering the ways in which they thought of themselves as marginalised and how this was perceived as influencing their pathways to adulthood.

A number of inter-related aspects of the retreat experience emerged as having a contribution to make towards the questions posed by this research. The remoteness of the venues was considered an important way of separating the participants from the social and environmental contexts that were, in some ways, holding them in the identities that they were attempting to reconstruct. The contrasting experience of power as it was experienced in the relationships of the community life of the retreats, and especially the approach to conflict resolution and the co-constructing of the programmes, is discussed for its contribution in helping the participants to develop new narratives of their identities. Outdoor activities are examined as a component of the programme that highlighted the way in which social dynamics helped or hindered the emergence of the voices of the young people. Reflective space was an especially important element of the retreats. Together with the routine of community life, the activities of the co-constructed programmes, and the various opportunities to discuss personal issues and possibilities, the reflective time supported a process of constructing and reconstructing personal narratives that I argue was

the critical aspect of the retreats' contribution to the transformation and empowerment of the young people.

The Retreat Programme

This section provides a picture of the retreat experience. The Stoneleigh Group's evaluation report [R-C05(6203)] suggests that the participants highlighted a number of key ingredients as critical to the quality of the retreat experience and that are discussed. These were reported as the remote setting, the simple lifestyle, the community living, and the authentic nature of the experience. In addition, several of the elements the participants claimed were significant aspects of the whole Stoneleigh Project were also key elements of the retreats. Those highlighted in the report were the mentoring and the mutual approach to relationships.

Camas was selected as the first venue for the Stoneleigh Project retreats as it was thought by the organisers to represent most of the elements that they were seeking from the experience. As a result the Camas approach underlay the Stoneleigh Project retreat format both at Camas and at subsequent venues.

Camas was an early outcome of the aims of the Iona Community. The partly abandoned fishing cottages were rented in 1947, refurbished by students from Rugby School, and opened as a 'youth camp' for schoolboys and university students. Ferguson (1998) comments that the biblical symbolism of fishing and that of salmon in particular, as it was the Celtic symbol of wisdom, were both adopted in these early days. It persists today in the form of the chapel of the nets. This is a room at Camas once used to store fishing gear and still full of old nets. It is now used for group discussions, and this was first instigated in the early stages when the fishing was still active and the building in shared use.

The centre soon became a retreat for 'delinquent youngsters from Borstals' who experienced fishing, outdoor activities, discussion, and optional worship. The project attracted charitable donations and inspired the establishment of youth centres in Glasgow. Ferguson suggests that the work at Camas was the most vital aspect of the Iona

Community during the 1950's and 1960's, coming closest to the radical action for social justice that was emerging as the core purpose of the Community. The practices of the Iona Community had led to the development of what I would argue is an integrated curriculum model (Bernstein, 1975, p. 26-28) at the Camas retreat centre. This enabled the community at Camas to create a pedagogic space to work with marginalised young people in a way that the Camas community claimed helped these young people to explore new understandings of themselves and their relationships with others. This experience they believed could help the young people who attended a retreat to find the power to transform their personal and social situations.

Throughout the development of the Iona Community, Camas continued to provide a retreat for young people variously from schools, youth groups, young offender programmes, and international exchange programmes. The central idea liberalised even further. Ferguson quotes Fisher, a youth worker and Community member, as writing in the early seventies:

... our place is fairly unique in that we have neither a statutory, educational or medical axe to grind, nor do we necessarily come into situations like most social workers, only after some sort of breakdown. This can be very important in the kind of relationships we can develop with people; simply human with no strings attached; and in the kind of role we can play in the community. It is surely central to the mission of the Church to affirm people's humanity.

(p. 115)

From the early days Camas claimed to value its distance from the social institutions of power and control. Relationship was seen as the central aspect of the Camas experience. The people who attended retreats were regarded as having as much worth as any other person and it is claimed that they were treated in this way. Within the context of simple living the retreats are described by the Iona Community as providing an experience of equity and mutuality. The setting disrupts the everyday power and control relations of people and the networks that support their identities. It also provides a social environment

of mutual and positive regard, creates an atmosphere. Arguably, this could be described as Bernstein's condition of *communitas* (Bernstein, 1996).

The practical ways in which Camas managed the potentially challenging nature of its approach to community life are partly described in its own literature (Iona Community, 2003a).

Camas offers a unique adventure to all. Many young people and adults have found their visits both memorable and meaningful through discovery and recreation, laughter and conversation, peace and activity coming together in this beautiful place. Based in old quarrymen's cottages in a remote bay on the Isle of Mull, twenty minute walk from the road end over moorland. Camas provides accommodation and hospitality for up to 26 with an emphasis on simple lifestyle and closeness to nature. At Camas, as part of the integration of worship and work that is at the heart of the Iona Community, reflections and daily chores are shared in by both guests and staff together.

An emphasis is placed on a work ethic and its association with worship. In this extract the facilitation style is more implied through the ideas of 'coming together', 'hospitality', 'discovery', 'activity', 'reflection', 'conversation', and 'sharing'. The nature of the experience is described as 'recreation', 'laughter' and 'peace'. The purpose of the retreat experience is unstated other than to refer to 'memorable and meaningful' visits. 'Remoteness', 'simplicity' and 'closeness to nature' are all offered as qualities that support the memorable and meaningful experiences.

The final report of my earlier evaluative study of Camas (Loynes, 2001) to their committee drew on notes made during my early visits. These were more explicit about the kind of facilitation being practised:

Camas is an intentional community of volunteers living simply in a remote location and welcoming visiting youth and community groups in order to support the spiritual development of both the volunteers and the guests. The programme offered is both active and reflective and emerges each week from the unfolding community life. The remote, simple and natural setting is understood as important elements in the experience. Issues of sustainability, peace and justice feature strongly, both in the choice of groups that are encouraged to visit and in the everyday life of the centre. This approach to working with young people is novel, perhaps unique in the UK.

(p. 3)

Life at Camas was busy, full of community chores as well as recreational possibilities. To the observer it was apparent that values were embedded in the way of life rather than in lessons or subjects (Loynes, 2001). In their literature (Iona Community, 2003a) the content of the retreat was described as:

Within this programme, there will be the possibility among other things of:

outdoor activities including camping, walking, sailing, canoeing and coastal exploration;

drama, writing, art and music;

free time for being as energetic or as lazy as is appropriate;

visits to places of local interest including Iona;

the necessary responsibilities of a shared lifestyle (everything from chopping wood to washing dishes and composting waste);

conversation, games, singing and ceilidhs;

spiritual reflection and exploration of personal journeys.

Within a busy programme arising from the physical and social skills of community and recreational life there was considerable emphasis placed on group building, shared responsibility, decision-making, and conflict management. The process of living at Camas for a week was described as complex. The co-ordinator, Heather, understood it to:

... involve the visitors coming to terms with the possibly contrasting values and lifestyle of the community in residence; realising and appreciating the way in which the visitors were, as she saw it, differently valued as equal members of the community; learning to exercise what she understood to be an enhancement of their power and creativity; working with the community to live together and develop a programme for each day, realising they had choice in what to do or in whether to do nothing and realising that their experiences were understood to be meaningful and were valued for the meaning they had for the individual rather than any particular course aim or adult view.

[FN-C05(0500)]

Heather describes how the challenges that life at Camas presents are taken head on through the gatherings at which conflicts between people were addressed and possibilities for each day explored. This, she thought, enabled participants to exercise power within a group and for a purpose. She placed the individuals at the centre of the process of making meaning of their experiences and of the process of deciding what to value. The values Heather understood to be those by which the community lived were thought by her to be good values to live by.

However, the key concept of the Camas approach as Heather understood it was not to promote an alternative set of values. Her intention was, by living overtly a contrasting set of values, to offer a way for visitors to see the values they already held. This then created an opportunity to explore the worth of these and other values and to suggest that they had choice in the values by which they lived.

This interpretation of the practice at Camas strengthens the argument that the curriculum was, by Bernstein's criteria, weakly framed and classified (Bernstein, 1975, p. 26-28). Participants were involved in the processes of applying a set of values to community life, developing a daily programme, and resolving conflicts as they emerged. Within the framework of the central values of the retreat community the participants held an equal voice to other community members. The discipline of the chores of living together plus the

attraction of the activities that were available combined to provide a reason to tackle the issues that might arise from new ways of understanding and relating to others. The politics of everyday life, within a strongly held framework of values, were explicit and the conflicts that arose within and between individuals were supported through carefully managed facilitation providing a site for the discourses to unfold between competing knowledge and meanings. The young people held, as Bernstein's criteria suggest, power in the construction of knowledge and the process of learning.

The Stoneleigh Group held their first four retreats at Camas between 2000 and 2002. From the beginning the Stoneleigh Project retreats were building on a curriculum and pedagogy constructed by the Camas community maintaining an approach that I argue would follow Bernstein's (1971) integrated code. The first Stoneleigh Project proposal adopted the Camas concept of retreat describing the approach as

... a week-long, retreat-style residential involving simple, remote, community living within an intentional community and a programme that emerges from the place and the people as they live together.

[CD-SG(0400)]

At first sight the claims made for the programme are identical to those made by Camas for its retreats and so were likely to be similar to them. However, the literature sent to the young people interested in attending added a purpose for the experience that Camas did not claim for their programmes. This was expressed in the following way.

You should be at a stage in your own personal journey of development to be interested and wondering about some of the big questions of who am I, where am I going and how will I get there?

[CD-SG(0400)]

Whilst the Stoneleigh Group intended to adopt the pedagogic practices of Camas, and so Bernstein's integrated code, it introduced the ideas of developing an explicit body of knowledge about the self as well as the overt intention of exploring personal values in relation to life choices. This was a new dimension for the Camas host community.

The Young Participants

As was intended by the organisers, many of the young people attracted to the Stoneleigh Project by the description of the retreat experience thought of themselves as different from 'successful' young people in transition to the adult world. They thought that this difference had marginalised them in various ways that were already the focus of youth work interventions by the Stoneleigh Group member organisations.

Table 4 summarises ten young participants that have been chosen to represent the diversity of young people from the 65 participants taking up the offer of a place on the Stoneleigh Project. The young people have been summarised in relation to how I interpreted their social networks, how they described their social capital in relation to family, education and social networks and how they described their identities.

Some of the young participants (Brad, Gordon, Trevor, Paul, Justin) can readily be recognised as young people in circumstances that lead them to be at risk from marginalisation; a combination of problematic family relationships, poor educational attainment and poor or dysfunctional social networks. Others do not so obviously fit this category (Sarah, Steve, Clive, Rose) although they identify themselves and are identified by the voluntary organisations of which they are members as so. These represent the young people who perceived themselves as marginalised because, despite their apparent social capital, they were unable to follow trajectories that would fulfil their aspirations. This sample has been chosen to represent the variety of entry and exit categories found within the whole sample and for whom I have a significant body of evidence concerning their experience of the Stoneleigh Project, its affect on their lives and their trajectories afterwards. In relation to their social networks I have clustered the young participants into

three groups at the entry point into the programme, those with strong, weak/chaotic and fluid networks respectively (see also Diagram 1, Chapter 12, p. 290). These three clusters have been chosen based on common themes in their trajectories that are identified by later analysis. Four of the selected young participants chosen from these three clusters are described in more detail below in a way that illustrates the wide range of issues that affected them in their public, social, and private lives. Later in this chapter I draw on the evidence of these and other young people from those selected for case study to discuss the experiences that the young people had of the Stoneleigh Project retreats. In Chapters 11 and 12 I will continue to draw on the data from this group to analyse and discuss the trajectories that young people followed and the way in which they perceived that the Stoneleigh Project influenced these.

Sarah was bright, successful, and on what might be perceived as a traditional pathway to an established career. Sarah had what she considered to be a successful and enjoyable time at school. She had gained some GCSEs and had then gone to college to take some further qualifications. She wanted to join the police service. When she completed her college education there was a long waiting list to enter the training for her chosen career. Her progress was further threatened by some poor results in her college work that put her at a disadvantage in the competition for places. She described herself as bored, losing self-confidence and prepared to give up on her chosen profession so that she could get some money and join in more fully with the social life of her friends. Further, she said how she was worried her results would not be good enough for her career plans. Her church group suggested she join Weston Spirit as a volunteer. This they suggested would look good on her CV, give her something to do that she enjoyed, and develop her interpersonal skills. Sarah followed this suggestion. At the suggestion of the youth worker supporting her she joined the Stoneleigh Project as a continuation venture to enhance her volunteering.

In Sarah's case she claimed that a lack of confidence had affected her progress and her plans. Her aims were in no way radical. Her background was a stable, professional family and her choice of career was conventional. Her father worked for the police service and this role in society cannot be considered one intended to challenge social norms. It can be

understood as a role in which Sarah can express her sense of wanting to do something to improve the social situation of her community.

Steve had a different story. Whilst successful at school he lacked confidence and also could not see a pathway through higher education and into the kind of work that he valued or that caught his imagination. S03 had gained a place at university but dropped out in his first year. As he put it he “couldn’t see the point of all this knowledge and it didn’t seem to lead anywhere”. He had been in trouble in school from time to time and had truanted a little. As a result he had become involved with Endeavour Training as a participant on a truancy prevention project. He liked the outdoor and sporting activities and had become a volunteer with the organisation teaching some of the skills to other young people. He was also learning IT skills through a project at Endeavour Training. He found this very rewarding. Endeavour Training had, according to his mentor, become his world as he had few friends outside this work. He only managed to hold down part-time and temporary jobs and lived alone. He had argued with his mother and stepfather during his studies and had left home.

In an interview Steve made a link between what he considered to be his difficult family circumstances and what he thought of as weak social networks and a perceived lack of confidence. Like Sarah he was successful in education. His family background was less stable and his university place was an educational departure from the norm for his family. However, what he believed marginalised him was a combination of his loss of confidence and his feeling that he would not find work that meant something to him. At the same time he was not clear what he considered to be meaningful. Marginalisation for Steve, then, included Sarah’s sense of low confidence and added the lack of what he perceived as a meaningful direction for his life.

Brad provides an example of the more extreme consequences of marginalisation that were understood by his mentor as largely created by structural factors in his private and social circumstances. Brad was just under 18 and so was young for the Stoneleigh Project. No one knew his real name and he rarely spoke. He had not been to school for many years and

was intermittently homeless. His father, who lived alone, threw him out of the house regularly because of the gang of friends he brought into the home and their drug using behaviours. Brad claimed he had been beaten when he was younger and sometimes had run away from home. He sometimes used drugs and sometimes sold them to schoolchildren. He became involved with Mobex through a 'diversion from crime' project involving conservation tasks. He loved the outdoors, especially the forest. His father had been a poacher and he knew a lot about wildlife and the woods near his home. When he joined a Stoneleigh Project programme it was at the suggestion of his mentor Ian, now a youth worker and an ex-forester. The programme was to be held in the forest Brad knew well.

Brad had rejected the public (educational) and private (family) worlds that failed to provide him with support. His social world consisted of a chaotic set of relationships with gangs of other youths. His defence against what I would claim is a good example of the violence, as Joas (2000) terms it, that society has shown to Brad was to choose to be nameless and voiceless. Youth work has provided intermittent support. His mentor claimed that, for Brad, natural history was a way to sustain a positive connection in his mind with his father at the same time as experiencing himself in a more positive way.

Gordon was a young person who participated in the first year of the Stoneleigh Project going to Camas early in the second year. He was a gay lap dancer who, when I first met him, aspired to becoming a partner in the club in which he performed and then opening his own sex shop. His identity was being formed within a sub-culture of the gay community on the edge of criminality. I think that he can be understood as dominated by his older partner who heavily controlled the pathway along which his identity was moving. Other pathways appeared to be concealed from him or he viewed them as out of reach.

Gordon's personal issues with his sexuality had marginalised him socially into a network that separated him from normal society. This sub-culture had provided him with a relationship, friends, and work that, initially, gave Gordon aspirations for a pathway within the sub-culture to a career. This was a strong network that he later came to think of as

exploiting him. He was also becoming involved in criminal activity such as drug use and prostitution. The voluntary organisation with which he was in touch had led him to Camas.

For young people involved in the voluntary organisations of the Stoneleigh Group it was not only the public domains of education and work that had become more dynamic and fluid than in the past. I would claim that, in this extended period of youth, social and private lives are also subject to the same trends. If being at home, in work, or being in higher or further education, had not materialised or were not experienced as steadying pathways by these participants then, in the extended period of youth, established social institutions were, in my view, largely unavailable. The evidence suggests that, as discussed in Chapter 4, youth culture could be supportive or it could further marginalise young people leaving them vulnerable to aspects of that culture that are considered unhealthy. From the narratives of Stoneleigh Group participants these could range from illegal activities such as substance misuse or theft, or activities that were thought to discourage young people from finding a healthy path to transition such as gang membership. These life stories also recognise that some young people were open to exploitation by unhealthy aspects of the adult world such as encouragement into substance misuse and sexual and criminal exploitation.

For the young people, then, the problems they thought that they were experiencing concerning their emerging adult identities involved aspects of their personal, social, and private lives. The social networks that these identities were embedded in were variously strong, weak, chaotic, and fluid. At this stage, the young people thought of weak peer group and strong family networks as, in part, problematic. Strong or chaotic peer group networks were, however, understood as potentially supportive of their identities. Despite this diversity, what unites this group of young people is that they have responded voluntarily to the opportunities provided by a voluntary organisation and have benefited from an older mentor. They have also responded, with that mentor, to the invitation to consider their directions in life through the Stoneleigh Project retreat experience.

The Retreat Experience

The data collected during the co-operative inquiry conducted by the participants between 2000 and 2002 for the evaluation of the Stoneleigh Project identified a number of elements of the retreat experience as significant. This data was re-examined in order to consider the questions posed by this research study. Additional data to support this research was also collected from the later round of retreats between 2002 and 2004. From this data a number of themes emerge that can illuminate the ways in which the participants experienced the retreats. In particular I focus on the themes of the remoteness of the setting, the approach to conflict resolution, the community living, the co-constructed programme, the approach to outdoor activities, and the emphasis on reflection.

Remoteness

A feature of many participants' accounts of their experiences at Camas was the walk from the end of the road to the buildings in the bay on the north coast of the peninsular. After what was often an overnight journey followed by a ferry crossing there is an hour's drive through moorland and mountain landscapes followed by a coast road with a view of islands and headlands. There are few houses and no villages. The vehicles are parked in a gateway and from there everything that doesn't walk is carried or wheeled in a wheelbarrow to Camas. The ground is wet and flat showing the signs of peat digging for fuel that is carried out by the centre. The sea and the buildings are out of sight until the last few steps. The apparent barren landscape then gives way to a cluster of buildings, young trees, a garden, washing blowing on the line, and people working or relaxing. This extract from an interview with Ben, a young person and then a mentor at Camas, captures something of the feelings of the participants on arrival.

The Camas Centre is situated on the North West coastline of the island enjoying unforgettable views of Staffa from its own secluded bay. It is a row of remote ex-fishing cottages with no electricity, central heating or running hot water in fact... if I were to say an open fire and a cold tap you'd have a better understanding of Camas, oh yeah...almost forgot no flushing toilets! (I think you get the picture)

I-M01(8202)

The centre was remote in more than a geographical sense. It was also remote from many of the typical features of modern living. The participants commented on the lack of mobile phone reception and no electricity. The lifestyle was kept simple and involved a considerable collective effort to feed and keep warm and well slept the combined group of up to 30 people.

The facilitators of the retreats understood the uniqueness and isolation of Camas in two ways. They thought of it as providing a separation from the events and relationships of everyday life that defined the young people in particular ways. At the same time they thought of the place, as the Camas community members did, as a contrast providing new perspectives and possibilities. This, they claimed, created what they termed a liminal space in which new ways of being could be experienced and rehearsed. In order to explain this idea to the young people the facilitators often used the liminal times of dusk and dawn and the inter-tidal zone as metaphors. The facilitators and mentors valued the walk across the bog as a symbol of this separation. In reality a pub and a shop were only two miles away but participants, when they mentioned them at all, reported that they felt they were beyond reach or of no relevance. The facilitators deliberately sought out places with similar qualities for the retreat venues in England and Wales. Cae Mabon also involved a walk and had composting toilets and no electricity. Gillerthwaite involved a walk and generated its own electricity by hydro-power. All the centres were set up to be meat-free and each one was populated with a community of volunteers living a simple and egalitarian lifestyle prior to the arrival of the young people.

The impact of this remoteness resulted in initial uncertainty and discomfort that often focussed around a central issue such as the meat-free diet or the composting toilets. At other times the visiting group resisted the routines of community life by non-attendance at the twice-daily community meetings, sometimes citing concern at the religious symbols and rituals they noticed. These early reactions brought to the fore a second characteristic of community life; the commitment to resolving conflicts peacefully and with equity.

Resolving Conflict

Each day at Camas traditionally began and ended with a community meeting in which participants were invited to reflect on the day before resolving any issues and making any plans. The reflection began with a time of silence and typically concluded with a celebration of the life shared together on the retreat. This, the Camas community claimed, reflected ‘the Christian basis of the Iona Community, and in particular its commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation’ (Iona Community, 2003b). The Camas community believed that they were not exclusive and claimed to welcome those of other faith traditions or those with no faith. The underlying value they believed they operated by was of ‘the intrinsic worth of every person, and of the earth itself, based on our Christian commitment’ (Iona Community, 2003b). This structure and approach to each day was followed by the Stoneleigh Project retreats at Camas and it was maintained by the retreats held after Camas, but without the references to a Christian heritage. Ben provided a participant’s perspective on these events.

Regular features of the time at Camas were the twice-daily reflections. These were periods during which people provided an opportunity to focus their thoughts on the day and what spirituality meant for them. During reflections one member of the group would lead the 5-10 minute session with a poem or activity to stimulate the individuals’ thinking. Interestingly enough, a clear distinction became apparent between spirituality and religion (this was evident after the group objected to the first ever reflection, which included a Christian prayer).

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Whilst always voluntary, the reflections were well attended. Those attending would sit in a circle around a central sculpture of natural objects created by the visitors during the first reflection. As well as exploring the meaning of their experiences that day, participants would share creative work, propose plans for the next day, identify and resolve conflicts, tell each other more about themselves, and organise the chores. The host community members made a great deal of effort to role model an egalitarian approach to the gatherings. The visitors were actively encouraged to voice their experiences and discuss whatever was of concern to them. The quality of the listening was high and comments and

questions tended to seek understanding rather than offer judgements. It was a space in which the style of the social relations of the community were established and maintained. As much as anything experienced on the retreats, the relationships in these meetings offered a contrast to the everyday experience for the young people. As a result of this contrast and because of the emotional warmth of these gatherings, they became central in the life of the retreats.

However, the rituals and meanings that the visitors sometimes perceived as being attached to them provoked early conflicts on several occasions. The following incident was recounted by six participants in this research and concerned an experience they had had shortly after the visitors arrived at Camas in 2001. Three young people, a mentor (Shaun), the visiting facilitator (Lucy) and two of the host community members (Heather and Joanne) reported this event.

One of the rooms at Camas is known as the room of the nets. It contains several abandoned fishing nets that are used as seats. The room was used exclusively for the twice-daily community meetings and reflections. Earlier in the year a member of the host community had repainted the external door to this room and decorated it with a Celtic cross. The cross is one of the first things seen by a visitor arriving at Camas along the footpath from the road. The three young people reported how this had concerned them as they did not want to be preached at whilst they were away. When they learned that the first meeting was to be held in this room they chose not to attend. When no one seemed concerned by this they decided to ask a host community member what the cross was and what it meant. The background to Camas was explained to them and they were introduced to the person who had painted the cross. The next day and subsequently they attended the meetings, missing only one in what they described as a protest when the same host community member opened a meal with a Christian prayer.

On hearing this story several more young people claimed they had shared the same concerns about the cross and the prayer but had joined in the first meeting anyway. One of them recounted how the symbolism of the lighting of candles to open the

evening meetings was explained by the co-ordinator and that the explanation had reassured them. They described how they understood the lighting of candles at Camas to be meaningful but in a way they experienced as different from situations such as church services that they had found alienating.

Further questioning confirmed that it was both the process of something being explained as well as the content of the explanation that reassured them. The three young people who had stayed away from the early meetings endorsed this. They described how it was the way in which their choice of action was unchallenged and their questions about the cross were taken seriously that had re-assured them. They described how they strongly disagreed with the beliefs of the person who had painted the cross but felt included and valued by the dialogue that followed. They reported that they were excited by their views being listened to and respected. The mentor, facilitator, and host community member, all described how this event had, they thought, been pivotal in establishing a way of relating to the young people throughout the week that was unusual and constructive for them. As the facilitator commented, 'it could so easily have gone a different way'.

R-S02(2301)

The Camas community had confounded the expectations of the visitors. What was thought to be familiar symbolism that the participants, young people, mentors, and facilitators found alienating because of the references they perceived to educational and religious hierarchical approaches, had been transformed into something quite different. Whilst Camas did not feel like school it could, by association, feel like church. The symbols and rituals compounded these early suspicions. This concern was made stronger by the Camas community members' reluctance to discuss their religious beliefs. The perceived Christian overtones were resisted by participants, churchgoers and atheists alike.

From the perspective of the participants, this incident highlights a number of themes. Firstly, it emphasised to them how important and how fragile trusting relationships with the young people were. Secondly, it illustrated how the Camas community, whilst claiming to hold certain values, did not always exhibit them. However, the participants did not hold

this to be significant once it was realised that these values were aspirations and that processes were in place to support the community when it fell short of realising them. Thirdly, it highlighted the way in which the actions of the community and the values that underpinned them became the subject matter of the retreats.

The approach taken to managing the conflicts that arose from concerns like those in the incident recounted above created a space in which the values upheld by the members of the community could be explored overtly in practical action and in conversation. The participants experienced the Camas community approach to relationships as what they described as ‘authentic’ and this was understood as something that could be trusted even at times of disagreement. This created a pedagogic relationship between the host community and the visitors that encouraged a learner-centred approach to addressing the questions that were the purpose of the retreats. Within two days of the start of each retreat everyone attended meetings in the room of the nets or the equivalent at other venues. The facilitators understood this as a sign of growing trust and curiosity facilitated by the respect shown to the young people and the willingness to listen offered by the host community members and mentors.

There are no accounts of interpersonal conflicts of a personal nature between participants. Nor were any observed at a level that caused concern amongst the young people, mentors and facilitators sufficient to consider an intervention. Those that were observed were reported as resolved informally by those concerned. The reported and observed conflicts between young people and mentors and facilitators focussed on levels of participation in the routines of the retreats or the development of the programme for the day. Most were reported as defused by the voluntary nature of involvement, the constant option to talk things over with a wide variety of people intent on being ‘good listeners’ and the option to do a variety of activities during a day or to do nothing.

Conflicts that required a formal resolution were largely concerned with grievances held by young people or mentors that the respect or trust promised had been broken by a patronising style (as in the example below concerning an abseil) or challenging values such

as the use of composting toilets or the serving of all vegetarian food (see chapter 11 for an example). These would arise amongst young people who, it was reported or observed, would discuss them with whoever they trusted. The serious approach taken by the listener together with the quality of the listening would often lead to no further action. The participants reported feeling able to work out a resolution for themselves. In a few cases these issues were brought to the circle meetings and discussed by all before a resolution would be proposed and adopted. Perhaps one aspect of these situations that ensured that they any conflict was low key was that the mentors and facilitators understood these issues to be important experiences that were a part of the pedagogic work of the retreats. They were not thought of as distractions or interruptions to another curriculum content. They were welcomed as central aspects of what it meant to be on the retreats.

Community Living

From the perspective of Joas' views on the genesis of values discussed in Chapter 8, the experience of joining a community that was living in accordance with a defined set of values could be understood as living by 'right' values. By 'right' Joas means values that have been pre-determined and are extrinsic to the individual as part of the wider social order (Joas, 2000). Community living at Camas and the successive retreats was, however, 'right' living by a 'social order' deliberately chosen to be in contrast to the values of mainstream society to which the Iona Community is opposed. The experience of the participants was that of sampling a set of values in what the Camas community thought of as an authentic way and which the participants experienced through action and conversation. The challenges this approach provoked were the subject of conflicts that were resolved in a manner coherent with the contrasting values of the community and so were, as discussed above, a central aspect of the experience of being on retreat. Developing the skills of reflection, expression, discussion, and acting a different way of life, I would argue meant that the participants were able to explore their own sense of 'good' living in Joas' sense of a life lived authentically to an internal set of values. This process, I suggest, is central to Bernstein's idea of a society reproduced or transformed by the active choices of the next generation and in a way that is congruent with his core educational values discussed in Chapter 8.

The following account of bread making illustrates how the chores of living worked in a practical way to engage young people in the exploration of the values of the community. Bread making was described by participants at Camas as a ‘defining’ incident by all the mentors as well as the facilitator of the first retreats. When a follow up weekend was suggested the first criterion set by the young people was that it should be somewhere they could bake bread again. Likewise, when the specifications for the new retreat venues were discussed the participants placed the capacity to bake bread high on their list of criteria.

Host community members took it in turns to bake bread each morning for breakfast; this involved getting up at 5am. Visitors were invited to join them and, on the first morning, two did. The smell and taste of fresh bread was the topic of conversation around the breakfast table. That evening the young people argued over who should be allowed to get up early and make bread the next day. This continued all week. When the young people were asked what they liked about bread making they described the physical act of kneading the dough, the pleasure from seeing the baked bread, and the pleasure from serving the community with something everyone clearly appreciated. The adults commented on how it became symbolic of a set of community values and a way of expressing those values implicitly. For them it defined the spirit of the Camas approach to living. The young people laughed about how, at home, getting up before lunchtime would be unusual, yet at Camas, 5am wasn’t a problem.

[FN-C05(0600)]

The young people most often explored the values of the community that they considered interesting through action such as this in the first instance. In this ‘defining’ event, joining in a community task, serving the community, creative production and, around the breakfast table, the giving and receiving of acknowledgement, were actions embedded in particular values that were all being explored experientially by the participants. The result was new knowledge about the self and what each person could do, how they could feel about certain kinds of work, how others might regard them, and how they could transform a task or a relationship through the meaning they attached to it. The use of time was also significant.

By getting up so early I would suggest the young people were also exploring different rules by which to live and different ways of engaging with rules.

Ideas about work were of particular interest to the Stoneleigh Group with its focus on work as an important site for the construction of an adult identity. The worshipful attitude, as the Camas community called it, to community chores was having a transformative effect on the young people's attitudes to the meaning and value of work. The meaning of work was also an important focus for the Camas community. The awareness of others, the act of giving service, and the delight in giving and receiving a response were pivotal to the way the participants thought the retreats worked. Whilst it is clear from the incident of the room of the nets that the religious interpretation of this particular work ethic was suspect for many if not all the young people they none the less responded readily to the practical experience. They can be thought of as rejecting the Camas host community's concept of sacrifice, for example, but readily discussed these tasks as meaningful in other terms such as giving service.

It also had a rejuvenating effect on the mentors' attitudes to what they thought of as their service ethic as youth workers. After a visit to the second retreat Phil, the director of one of the Stoneleigh Group partners, described this activity from the perspective of a youth worker. He acknowledged the importance of a low-key style of intervention and emphasised the benefits of confronting established patterns of identity in that, he claimed, it produced people who could be more flexible and feel good about it.

There are some things we do that we just ... do – because we have to or because we're familiar with them or because we enjoy them. But sometimes we find ourselves doing something that is outside our previous experience.

One member of the course spent an evening baking bread, something he had never done before. Another went fishing for the first time in his life and caught two fish. Both chose these activities entirely of their own accord. These apparently trivial

incidents can in fact be extremely important in the lives of people, especially the young, because they may redefine the individual.

Someone who has previously thought of himself as a climbing instructor becomes redefined as a climbing instructor with domestic skills. Someone who has learnt to cope in an indoor, urban environment becomes redefined as a person with a range of indoor and outdoor skills. Such redefinition gives people confidence, independence, resilience and a more positive outlook. It may change the course of their lives.

‘If I can bake bread, I can do anything!’ Sounds absurd? Yes, but it’s true, more or less.

Here’s where we depart from standard practice. Participants choose and follow their own developmental path, with minimal prompting or direction and with only as much feedback and interaction as they want.

[R-SG(1100)]

For Phil, I would argue that developing self-knowledge took the form of Bernstein’s (1996) idea of deep knowledge. By this term Bernstein meant that knowledge was understood by the pedagogues as mutable in that what knowledge was of importance and what it meant was negotiated with the young people rather than determined by an established curriculum imparted by the facilitators. The consequence of this approach was that young people were able to develop critical thinking skills and that this, coupled with an experiential way of engaging them with the knowledge, encouraged them to ‘think the impossible’ (Bernstein, 1996, p. 28-31) of themselves, as Phil claimed that they did.

Other aspects of community life that were reported by the young people as provocative included the cooking arrangements, communal eating, the composting toilets, the twice daily gatherings to make collective decisions, facing up to conflicts, positive regard and acceptance of others, making one’s own entertainment, no electricity, no hot water, and more. All of these were lived by the resident community as taken for granted and as meaningful ways to live life. They operated by social rules that were accepted but only locally known and, partly because of the contrast with the everyday lives of the visitors

and partly because of the implicit nature of these rules in the life of the community, they were often experienced as a challenge to the visitors. Working openly with the visitors as they wrestled with these challenges provided the opportunity to question old knowledge and explore new knowledge about the values by which each participant lived.

The debates over values were not a one-way process of the retreat community challenging the visitors. The community life of the retreats also provided the opportunity for identifying and negotiating other values that were introduced by the young people and that were challenging to the host community. Another incident illustrates this well. Mac, a host community volunteer at the Gillerthwaite retreat and a vegetarian, described how, on the day dedicated to thinking about others, he decided to buy meat to barbecue for the meat-eaters. The course catering had been largely vegetarian.

I thought that, if I was doing this for them, then they should do something back to honour the life that was taken in order for them to eat meat. The lads asked to make bows so we worked on them all day. They also built a sculpture of a pig out of willow and when the time came to eat they fired flaming arrows into the sculpture which burst into flames to start the fire for the cooking.

[FG-Part(7104)]

The negotiation over the values behind food preferences acted as a means to work out a mutual and egalitarian approach to resolving differences of view. The values underlying the resolving of conflicts, and especially the power experienced by the young people in participating in their resolution, were as meaningful in this incident as the subject of the debate. Mac understood this as a recognition of and respect for the difference in values held by members of the community. He thought this was a big step for the young people concerned, taking them well beyond their normal experience of the distribution of power between young people and adults perceived by them as in authority. It provided them with new knowledge of themselves, of adults, and of ways of relating with adults that were discovered through experience and could then be enacted in the life of the retreat.

This two-way negotiation as a process on the retreat programme was enhanced by the development of the retreats at venues other than Camas. Lucy, a co-facilitator on this retreat, felt that this was because the host community understood more fully the purpose of the retreat in the context of the Stoneleigh Project, a view endorsed by Liz, the other co-facilitator.

Living by a contrasting set of values in a remote setting was initially described by the participants as uncomfortable. However, the early experiences of participants resulted in levels of trust and curiosity that allowed the young people to develop and explore their skills at engaging with relationships, values, and lifestyles in a new way. It can be argued that the retreats emerged as safe places for the young people to explore new possibilities for themselves. This experience resonates with Taniguchi, Freeman and LeGrand-Richards (2005) concept of the stage of fractional sublimation discussed in Chapter 3. As I have suggested above, the challenges in the lives of the young people can be thought of as having created levels of discomfort that, given new opportunities, had encouraged them to develop different identities. The separation from the everyday world enforced by the retreat can be thought of as providing the space to explore such new possibilities. Nevertheless responding to the lifestyle of the retreat communities was only a part of the process. The retreats also provided a space in which the participants could create their own programme and so develop a sense of agency in the construction of their identities.

The Co-constructed Programme

In the first two or three days the participants spent most of their time joining in with the pattern of community life and ‘chilling out’. Later, once the young people had become familiar with the area and knew some of the resources available to them in the form of equipment and the skills of the host community and themselves, a programme of activities would be developed. The participants often described the retreats as having no programme. In practice what this meant was that there was no pre-determined programme and that, in the spirit of the community life on retreat, the programme was co-constructed by everyone. The only framework for this offered by the facilitators was that, whatever happened, should relate to the declared Stoneleigh Group purposes of the retreats, ‘who am I, what do I believe in and where am I going?’

Ben, a young person at Camas in the first year, described in an interview the way the retreat programmes developed in the later stages of the visits. He highlighted that participation in the activities was optional and that this critically endorsed the emerging egalitarian style of relationships developed in the earlier stages.

Plans for the first couple of days, once the community chores had been completed, were largely aimed at exploring the coastline around the bay or simply relaxing outside even if this involved being fully dressed in warm clothes and waterproofs. Later in the week, once the skills of the host community became clear and the opportunities presented by the landscape emerged, more familiar outdoor activities were proposed.

There were several activities on offer which the group decided to include on the program on a 'drop in basis', giving individuals the freedom to engage in the group or not. The choice not to engage was not seen as a negative action but rather as a specific need of an individual to 'get their heads together'. The activities were aimed primarily to focus the group's thoughts on their own spirituality and included the use of music, discussion, art/sculpture, poetry and adventurous activities, many of which were unfamiliar activities to the group.

I-M01(8202)

Activities were provided by participants, visitors, and host community members and all were optional. Many were creative ways of supporting reflection time or ways of sharing people's thoughts and feelings about themselves and about the community and the place. Others were new ways to explore and experience a place; camping out, sailing and kayaking trips to nearby islands, and walks. Some were more conventional outdoor activities. The latter were often the focus of conflicts concerning power between those with skills and knowledge and those without. As such I suggest that they highlight the way in which power was valued in these relationships, as the following incident illustrates.

It involved an abseil. It illustrates how Heather's sense of how participation was intended to work was an ideal not always lived up to. This incident was recounted in the review of the retreat by one young person (Martin) and me.

Most of the visitors wanted to abseil in a quarry on the other side of the bay from the centre. Everyone decided to walk over and at least watch. Heather asked me to keep an eye out for Martin. She felt he was vulnerable and that his fear of failure and ridicule might overcome his desire to join in and be seen by the group joining in. She asked me to keep chatting with him, suggesting that I pretend that I was also nervous of having a go and that we could support each other. Watching out for nervous young people in order to assess their needs in an activity like this was familiar to me. Pretending to be other than I was (I am a qualified climbing and abseiling instructor) was not and I felt less comfortable about this. It felt at odds with my own values as well the openness and equity of the community I had experienced up until now. I did as Heather asked talking with Martin at the top of the cliff while others abseiled. Finally, I said I was ready to have a go if he was and we agreed to do it. I went first, trying to act slow and clumsy. He then followed getting loud applause from everyone when he reached the bottom. He was grinning broadly. He took me aside and asked if he was right in thinking I could abseil well. I said I could and that I had been deceiving him. He replied that I was not very good at lying and that he knew all along but thanks anyway. He then added that, if I abseiled properly, he would do it again. We did and several others had a second go whilst two who had come to watch also joined in.

My notes describing what Martin said he felt provide his perspective on the incident and explore my concerns at the time. Martin said 'He was bullshitting me. It didn't matter because I wanted to have a go and it helped me make my mind up. When they clapped it didn't feel right. I told him to do it properly next time so I could too'.

[FN-C05(0600)]

This intervention, whilst apparently well meaning, seemed at odds with the values of equity and openness practised at Camas. It felt paternalistic and manipulative. This brought

to light some of the qualities that I, and perhaps others in the group, felt were oppressing the development of these young people and that the Camas approach sought to counter. The strategy ‘worked’ in that the young person abseiled. However, placing a high value on participation was a conventional value of outdoor education that I had thought was countered by the Camas approach. The young person held the same view. His intervention acted to correct the balance as I abseiled ‘honestly’ for him and he felt happy about abseiling for his own reasons rather than to keep me happy. I notice that, despite expressing unease with judging activities as successful by the level of ‘participation’, I still noted at the end of my story that others who had been watching chose to have a go!

What stands out in this incident is that, by later in the week, participants, including young people, were making interventions to maintain the set of rules concerning the right way to relate at Camas, as they understood it.

Conventional outdoor activities, whilst widely available at Camas, were either poorly taken up or ignored by the participants. Apart from this account of the abseil they were not mentioned in the daily round ups, they didn’t feature in photographs, they were not described in interviews, and they were not mentioned in the follow up weekends. It is interesting to speculate whether the choices being made by the young people reflect structural aspects of outdoor activities such as kayaking and climbing. As has been suggested in Chapter 8, their nature requires, as Bernstein would describe it, a curriculum coding involving stronger classification and framing. Specialist skills and knowledge have to be imparted, tested and supervised by an expert. Without this skill acquisition would not be achieved within a framework of safety. In addition they are activities that can readily define some people by what they cannot or do not want to do setting them apart from a dominant social group of those that are ‘successful’. According to Joas (2000) this could remind participants of the alienating educational and social frameworks from which Camas is supposed to be different.

The narrative above describes how a shift from a more trustworthy and mutual relationship focussed on the learner to one that was more goal oriented and focussed on the activity

solicited a defensive and then challenging response. It indicates how the participants valued the egalitarian nature of relationships on the retreat and that they were capable of anticipating which activities might work against this approach. I would argue that they avoid them, or, if their fears were realised, confronted the shift in power. This in itself was an interesting indicator that young people had found the confidence to challenge conventional power arrangements once it was clear the adults present were prepared to listen and change. Once what can be understood as a weak framing (Bernstein, 1971) had been introduced and found to be of value, when it was then threatened, it was defended and the young people were active in this defence.

Once the Stoneleigh Project retreats moved to other venues, and after consultation with young people and mentors, it was decided that no formal outdoor activities requiring expert tuition would be offered. They were also taken off the programme for the last retreat at Camas. Whilst walks, camps, fires, and solos continued, other activities were created from within the imagination of the group.

Outdoor Activities

Nevertheless, outdoor activities were significant to the young people as a means for exploring and expressing themselves. Ways of finding and exploring new knowledge of themselves was available to the young people on retreat in a wide variety of forms. In part this was developed in a physical or embodied way by providing new sensory experiences, new forms of movement, and new physical skills. These physical experiences provided ways to both explore and express identity in a way that complemented and interacted with the social context provided by the community. The continuing story of Brad illustrates this.

My notes concerning Brad describe a person who did not speak, did not make eye contact, and who did not join in throughout the first three days of the retreat. He was a 'hoody' wearing a parka jacket with its hood and fur lined collar up at all times making it hard to see his face at all. I did not see him after this but noted later that Liz and Lucy both described a moment in which they perceived Brad to change dramatically.

On the fourth day Brad joined a group for a hill walk. Liz described how it was hard to keep him with the rest as he surged ahead up the steep slope. On the top of the ridge Liz described how Brad threw back his hood, raised his arms in the air and shouted into the strong wind, and then ran into the wind and back several times. His descent was as fast as his ascent and Liz said he had the tea on for the others when they got back. Lucy described how his hood was off and how he made brief and then increasingly steady eye contact. That evening she described how he spoke for the first time about how he felt on the hill and then, 'as if a dam had burst', went on to tell everyone of his problems with being kicked out by his Dad, being mixed up in drugs, and how he got his nickname.

Lucy described how one of the host community members had brought her young child with her. The mother noticed Brad paying attention to the child around the fire that evening. The next day she asked Brad to baby-sit for her for a while. For the rest of the retreat Lucy described how Brad spent all the time he could minding or playing with the child and making tea whenever he could persuade someone to ask for a cup.

His name seems pertinent to this story but, as no one knew him by any other name, I cannot use it here. Suffice it to say it implied silence and enigmatic looks.

I met him again at the follow up weekend. I sat in the corner of the hut by the wood-burning stove watching the group prepare a meal and catch up with each others' stories. Brad sat diagonally opposite me making no eye contact. I wondered what had become of the person in the accounts of Liz and Lucy although there was no hood. After a while he left the room, returning with fire lighting materials. As he knelt over the task he looked up at me and asked if I was still making notes about the week, to which I replied that I was. He replied that he would like me to note that he was trusted to light the fire and look after Mary. At that point Mary wandered in and up to the fire and Brad spent time talking to her about the fire and how pretty and how dangerous it was. When Mary wandered outside Brad offered to make me tea. In the conversation that I led that evening in which I asked the group about the retreat, their memories of it, and the consequences to their lives as they understood them, Brad wrote and talked. He described how the mountains were a new passion for him and he had been out with the voluntary organisation on several trips. He

wanted to spend as much time as he could in the forests and hills. He described how his friends now called him a tree hugger and how he did like hugging trees on the conservation projects he'd joined. He added that he was proud to be called a tree hugger by his friends and, because they thought he was tough, they wouldn't give him any hassle over it. He also described how he was now back at home with his Dad again and had promised not to let his mates do drugs in the house.

[FN-C05(4502-03)]

For Brad, rather like Gordon, a need to get away involved a big physical effort followed by a physical cleansing and the removal of a mask, in this case the wind and not the sea and a hood and not make up. I would argue that values were being acted out through the body and the senses were immersed in a stimulating element as a form of symbolic transformation. The changes continued to be embodied in the actions he took on behalf of others such as tea making and child minding. Eye contact and other more positive body images eventually led to social interaction that included revealing his story, joining in and, later, initiating conversations.

This example highlights the role of the outdoors in providing a context for new knowledge of the self. For Brad there was a link between the new physical self, 'the mountains are where I feel myself', and his opening up to the possibility of new knowledge of himself in a social context, 'I feel like somebody at Gillerthwaite' and 'this is what I want to be like' [FN-C05(4903-04)]. The meaning the mountains came to have for Brad was as a source of new knowledge of himself that he could sustain by revisiting them.

It is interesting to note that, whilst Brad benefited from recontextualised knowledge of himself, the experience is not directly mediated by a pedagogue. Even if a facilitator had told Brad that the feel of the wind was good, which in this case no one had, the evidence of the experience affected him of itself. It is possible to speculate that the unmediated experience was an important first step in Brad considering new knowledge of himself. It was a positive experience that he and his mentor claimed led him to open up to other possibilities within the social environment of the retreat.

The knowledge involved in this account was self-knowledge; an awareness of what made him feel good, feel valued, and feel liked or loved, as well as an implicit critical assessment of what he did not like. It was also the knowledge that he was respected, listened to, trusted to take responsibility, and that there were places and people who could make him feel like that.

The idea of the outdoors as a liminal space as discussed above was also understood in a metaphorical sense. The retreat landscapes were described by the facilitators as providing a landscape that was not defined by others on behalf of the visitors. Events unfolded such as swimming, beach games, rock pooling, rock hopping, meals, fire lighting, singing and, above all talking, especially around the fire. Little activity, however, was ever planned. The place provided a novel and undefined context onto which a new story could be written.

In some ways I would suggest that this extends Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) idea of a 'place to go' (p. 506) to the outdoor residential and intergenerational context. They state that 'youth is an expansive moment, and young people moving towards social majority invariably feel the need for room to nurture and explore their emergent sense of themselves ...' (p. 506). I suggest that the adult free nature of the places Hall *et al.* describe, bedrooms, bus shelters and street corners, is maintained, partially at least, by the freedom to be alone, the diversity of adult relations and the egalitarian and student-centred principles of the pedagogic practice. Hall *et al.* focus on the significance of space as not only a 'room of one's own' but also 'room to move'. They understand this as '... a place to go - space in which to meet and be with others, space which young people can enter on their own terms and on their own initiative, unaccompanied and unsupervised by adults' (p. 506). For young people 18 plus 'trapped as teenagers' (Williamson, 1997, p. 184) such a space would be vitally important. However, I suggest that a space in which to meet adults on different terms is also important. It could be understood as a space that replaces the work place. The retreats and their outdoor and intergenerational setting together with their facilitation style offered both kinds of spaces almost at need.

The facilitators sometimes described this liminal quality of the retreat spaces as neutral, meaning that the cultural history of the locations did not define the young people who engaged with them. However, it was also their decisions, however implicit, not to provide a construction for these places that allowed the retreat spaces to be liberating in this way. The socio-historical aspect of these places such as the history of Camas as a quarry and later a fishing station, or the background to Iona as a religious centre, whilst always available to the visiting participants, were never apparent as an influence on the actions or accounts of participants. The irony of Camas providing experiences that were thought of as liberating through a simple, land-based work regime building on the runrigs of what was probably an oppressive, hard, and tedious crofting lifestyle, was lost on the participants.

There was another dimension to the liminal role of the outdoors on the retreats. Some participants slept outside by the fire or in tents. The firelight and the candles added another aspect to the experience that was sometimes referred to by the facilitators as ‘elemental’. The tent walls provided a more interactive relationship with the wind, sand, temperature, and rain than a building would. These qualities that were a part of being at Camas were explicitly sought-after as qualities of the places chosen for the other retreats. They were thought to support the possibility of change for the young people by demonstrating the dynamics of relationships and providing what were considered to be rich metaphors for human life experience. This aspect of the outdoors was particularly relevant to both the formal and informal reflective time discussed next.

Reflective Space

The outdoors was a space for reflection as well as action. It was common to see participants sitting alone or in small groups in silence looking at the view or following a stream or the strand line. Lucy wrote in her first report as facilitator of the retreats

During the course of the residential I had many private conversations and observed or was told about others that occurred. The content of these conversations was about the individuals’ lives and what they were doing with them, difficulties they faced or had to face and what was worthwhile for them. I also saw people taking the

opportunity to wander off and find a quiet space for themselves or sitting outside in the moonlight, marvelling that they had never seen the moon without streetlights, volunteering to do communal jobs or just doing them anyway. All of this is evidence about the value of the programme.

R-S02(0700)

Participants also described some of the rhythmic chores such as kneading the dough or raking the lawn as important reflective times. Rose, a young participant, described the quality of the feelings she felt from relationships with place that she experienced on the retreats. The sense of joy and happiness was described as irrepressible and expressed through laughter.

The first morning at Cae Mabon I woke up with an overwhelming sense of joy. I could hear the stream in the background, the natural noises from outside and the daylight flooding in on me and I felt so happy to be there.

[FG-Part(5403)]

Rose reflected on what these feelings meant to her. She described how the physical experiences in particular were moving and how this sense of movement inspired her to act. These actions for her were not only joyful expressions of her delight. She also used this inspiration to tackle difficult issues in her private life. She was claiming that this feeling could evoke a sense of agency or power expressed physically and socially. She also believed that this supported her in transforming herself by motivating her to address the issues that prevented her from progressing on the path she wanted to follow – ‘just to live!’

Someone once said to me that all teachers need to give their students inspiration. But what is inspiration? My dictionary defines it as ‘a divine influence or action upon the lives of certain persons that is believed to qualify them to receive and communicate sacred revelation or the act or power of moving the intellect or emotions’. I believe

that all you need to be inspired is just to live and being at Cae Mabon certainly taught me that.

[E-M-R03(7604)]

Rose identifies several factors that helped her to take the time to relax and reflect.

At Cae Mabon I found myself with a lot of time to relax and to think and reflect on what direction my life is going in and to put it all back into perspective. Whilst sitting with a mind empty of thoughts, desires and emotions I realised that some of the answers were staring me right in the face and I just hadn't had the courage to look at them. On my solo in the woods I attained a stillness of the mind and I became more aware of my own thoughts. I could no longer block my thoughts out because I had no pressures or demands being thrown at me so I had nothing else to think about.

[E-M-R03(7604)]

The place contributed to Rose's settling down and appreciating time on her own without pressure or judgement. Jack, a volunteer host community member, describes the same experience in his comments.

One thing that encouraged me so much over the week is how a group of people from widely differing backgrounds can work so closely together and be so relaxed, honest and form a community in such a short space of time. For total strangers to become a special part of your life whom you can implicitly trust so soon gives me great encouragement in the inherent goodness of the human spirit in all of us if we can only release it from the prisons that ourselves and modern society create ...

I hope that I will somehow be able to help others to 'escape' and experience the same joy, peace and freedom.

[FG-Part(5403)]

Like Rose, Jack valued the chance to ‘escape’ from ‘modern society’ in order to gain a state of mind and a perspective that, for him, allowed new values to emerge. Rose was clear that it was the remoteness of the place and the simple lifestyle that provided this sense of isolation in which modern life is less visible. Rose continued:

At the beginning of the week I felt as though my mind was a big waterfall with thoughts tumbling down like rushing water. By mid-week it had begun to settle down and become a quiet river and then by the end of the week it was like a peaceful ocean without waves.

[FG-Part(5403)]

The participants, then, attributed remote, simple, and unusual places with the capacity to provide a reflective space. The natural setting was described as comfortable, safe and joyous. In this space young people contemplated themselves in relation to a non-human ‘other’, as Joas (2000) puts it, and found what they described as the peace and courage to think through their narratives of their personal lives up to these points. Time for solitary or collective reflections out of doors were offered as a part of the possible programme by the facilitators of the retreats, usually later in the week. The young people also took considerable amounts of solo time informally and frequently throughout the retreats. Meaningful solo time offers a very weak framing as the mentors and facilitators have little influence over the content or the processes involved. They do create the opportunities by raising expectations, encouraging young people to use their time in this way and by programming the time in some cases. They also provide support, notably by offering a vigil for overnight solos so that everyone knows there is a lighted place to return to at any time of night at which someone will be awake and ready to listen. Being ready to listen to any experiences of solitude provided a social context in which the stories of the experiences young people had could be told.

I discussed in Chapter 3 the emphasis that Sibthorp (2003) and Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) place on reflection time in the latter stages of an outdoor experience. They understand this

as a time for reconstructing an identity based on the new knowledge acquired from the outdoor experiences. I would add to this that the young people also developed a level of skill and confidence that allowed them to take time for an inner dialogue. Much of the thinking that the participants described as occurring during reflection times was the reconstruction of historical narratives. In many cases the new narrative re-valued the young person within the story and placed them in a position that gave them more agency for what could happen next. Rose illustrated this well. This enhanced sense of agency was also present in their increased readiness to contemplate future life paths.

It was important to the participants to recount the thoughts they had had during reflections to the other participants. Telling their stories to each other and being heard were valued times. These conversations occurred in formal meetings or through creative activities as well as in informal groups or, sometimes, a one to one conversation with a mentor or facilitator. Many of the participants noted how firelight, movement, sharing a view or watching the waves helped with these occasions.

Conclusion

A retreat is an unusual approach to informal education out of doors that is not widely discussed in the literature. The Camas community were wary of the term. One member commented that ‘it’s more of an advance than a retreat!’ [FN-C05(0600)]. I understand this to mean that some community members thought of the retreats held by the Iona Community as engaged with the social world rather than removed from it. I have suggested that the Stoneleigh Group, with the help of the Camas community, took the reflective and student led aspects of outdoor education practice and emphasised them within the framework of a pedagogical relationship that was highly critical of the traditional power relations within society and within education. This approach was applied to young people who had already experienced significant challenge and discomfort and so, I would claim, were already living in conditions that encouraged a reworking of identity in their personal, social and public lives. In my view it was these elements of the Stoneleigh Project retreats that were important to the participants rather than the retreat community’s particular ways of relating to the outdoors.

Separation, I have argued, was important. It is frequently mentioned as significant in many forms of outdoor practice. In this case it can be understood as the removal of the social and spatial references defining the young people in their everyday worlds that were considered to initiate the exploration of new possibilities for an adult identity. The effect of the retreats was both real and symbolic. It was real in the sense that the young people could think, believe, and act differently. It was a symbolic event in that it was also a benchmark for a potential turning point that could be attributed as the cause of future developments in their life stories.

A contrasting social as well as environmental setting was a significant aid in the task of exploring the Stoneleigh Project's questions of 'who am I, what do I believe in and where am I going?' Strong values, upheld by the host communities, emphasised individual responsibility, collective endeavour, and challenged social norms and the conventional distribution of power in the social world. The retreats took a different approach to the distribution of power between people and within society. This supported both the experiential and social learning processes on the retreats and emphasised the voices of the young people.

An important aspect of the experiential learning was the outdoor opportunities that provided a novel context in which to explore identity in an embodied way. New knowledge of a physical and emotional self enhanced the potential for the re-constructing of identity.

An approach to learning that was experiential and social, and was explored in action and conversation, I argue involved the participants in a deeper understanding of the aims of the retreats. The participants saw themselves as if in a mirror, encountered others who were different to them and were themselves regarded differently. These were all opportunities to see themselves in a new light. Critically, the participants developed the confidence and skills for intra- and inter-personal dialogues about their changing perceptions of themselves. The retreats then provided a space in which changing identities were explored in action and conversation. These creative opportunities were significant. The landscape added to these possibilities by providing a context for what were felt to be authentic

experiences of the self. As well as a rich source of metaphors and a stimulating context for reflection time, in which old narratives of the past were rewritten and new narratives for the future considered, it provided a stimulating and 'neutral' setting to explore new identities.

Narrative emerged from the retreats as what I argue is the central and critical aspect of the retreat process. Learning to take an interest in the stories of others, 're-reading' their own stories, 'writing' their own as well as a collective story, and constructing stories with new meanings all played a part in the reworking of the identities of the participants, especially the young people but also the mentors. Recounting narratives was a social process that benefited from the community in two ways; as a source of new ideas and as an audience that listened. Each story was individually unique but each needed a social setting in which it was heard, acknowledged, and accepted. Importantly, without the social context of people from other walks of life and other generations the pedagogical process of learning to tell, critique, and create a personal narrative, and to have the skill as well as the courage to create, would have been less well developed. Likewise I would argue that the equitable distribution of power was also critical to the quality of the narrative experience.

According to the participants then, the weak framing, as Bernstein (1971) would have termed it, of the outdoors on the Stoneleigh Project retreats created a programme with which the participants can be understood to have explored themselves experientially in action and socially in conversation together. This was combined with reflection time in which participants reported that they were able to reconsider their histories and imagine their futures. Within this the role of narrative, both understood as action and conversation, was central and critical to the process. I discuss this in the next chapter. In Chapter 12 I will examine in what way the narratives of the young people unfolded in the follow on to the retreats.

Chapter 11:

The Role of Narrative within the Stoneleigh Project

Introduction

In Chapter 10 I concluded that a useful way to understand the experience the participants had of the retreat programme was through developing and exercising the ability to narrate their life stories. Labov (1972) claims that it is the ‘complicating factors’ that define events as a narrative. By this he meant the out of the ordinary events that happen to people and that cause them to make choices. It is this ‘evaluation’ of events through exploring and making choices that Labov suggests is at the core of a narrative. I have argued in Chapter 10 that the young people attracted to the Stoneleigh Project were already marginalised to a point where they were uncomfortable with their identities. I suggested that, by joining voluntary youth organisations, they were seeking different pathways or choices in life, of which the Stoneleigh Project was an extension or a new chapter in their narrative.

I also suggest that the Stoneleigh Group partners can be understood as setting out to provide an opportunity through the Stoneleigh Project for the young participants to evaluate their past lives. The retreats in particular were intended as events on which the young people could reconsider their old identities and make choices about new ones before developing the skills, knowledge and networks that would support them.

Additionally, I have argued in Chapter 10 that the young people used the experiential and social opportunities on the retreats to offer reconstructed narratives of their past lives and to tell new narratives of their current and potential lives. The approach taken by the Stoneleigh Project facilitators created a space on the retreats in which these narratives found voice, in which alternative narratives were available in the lifestyles of the host communities and accompanying mentors, and where the young people could develop the skills to explore new narratives of themselves. This chapter analyses the retreats from this perspective in order to develop a deeper understanding of the pedagogic processes that supported this experience.

Recruitment

Bernstein (1996) suggested that what he called the recognition code of an educational programme played a major role in whether a student thought that the experience was relevant to or achievable by them. For example some students, he claimed, had the social background to value the abstract knowledge offered by schools whilst others felt excluded from these forms of knowledge whatever their educational potential. As a result, as I have discussed in Chapter 8, some young people he claimed were marginalised or alienated from education and developed a defensive stance towards any educational initiatives intended to support them. Young people affected in this way then seek alternative ways to construct an identity that may either fall short of their potential as citizens or become marginalised or deviant.

Whilst some of the young people introduced in Chapter 10 can be understood in this way (Brad for example), others, such as Steve, considered themselves marginalised by what they considered to be inappropriate pathways for their particular interests within education or employment. Family and social attitudes to personal aspects of their lives marginalised others, such as Gordon. Rather than being excluded by abstract knowledge from a conventional path to adulthood they were challenging or challenged by the established routes provided by established bodies of knowledge and opportunities for work that society offered. In any case, all these young people felt let down and acted defensively, to the point of marginalisation, towards education and work as a means of identity construction. Extending Bernstein's concept of recognition codes to the social and public world outside the realm of education it could be said that, for many of the young participants, this world lacked the recognition codes relevant to their emerging identities.

However, in every case, the young people of the Stoneleigh Project had already become involved in the informal educational work of the voluntary organisations in membership of the Stoneleigh Group. They had found within this approach recognition codes that had re-engaged them with adults, learning, and work as ways of constructing their adult identities. I suggest that this step helped the young people to restore their trust in adult educators who held the values of informal education. This enabled them to view the offer of the retreat programme, usually made as a personal invitation from a trusted adult youth worker, as an

intriguing rather than alienating prospect. Later in the programme, recruitment was further enhanced by the stories of young people who had previously been on retreat. These factors, internal to the relationships within the youth work organisations rather than external to the personal, social and public worlds of the young participants, would appear to have determined who came forward as recruits.

Whilst no one ever returned home before the end of a retreat the evidence indicates that, during the first day or two, attendance was sometimes precarious. In the early stages of several retreats incidents such as those described in Chapter 10 concerning the Celtic cross and the room of the nets led to a few participants temporarily reducing their levels of participation. However, no one ever raised the possibility of leaving. I have already identified in Chapter 10 some of the factors that encouraged the young people to engage with the retreat experiences. These were the volunteer nature of the mentors and host community which enhanced feelings of trust, the positive regard in which the young people were held by these people, the equitable approach of the retreat facilitators to developing the experience, and the particular style of the community to resolving conflicts.

To this I would add that the diverse forms of informal education available were a significant factor that provided a range of recognition codes for what I have already shown to be a diverse group of people. By understanding action within the community (such as bread making), action in the landscape (such as camping), reflection time (informal and formal), and conversation (formal and informal), as pedagogic opportunities I would argue that most young people were able to recognise something within the experience as of value to them and from which they could learn. In addition they could come to this realisation in their own time. These are indicators of what Bernstein would have termed a highly integrated approach. The weak classification and framing of the negotiated curriculum and the equitable distribution of power amongst the community, residents and visitors alike, made it possible for those challenged by the unusual nature of the retreat community to stay.

Creating Discourse

By disembedding a wide range of elements of the social world in an integrated type of educational programme called a retreat, the Stoneleigh Group, in partnership with Camas, created what Bernstein (1996, p. 47) would have termed a site of discourse that was centrally about power and knowledge in that world. A range of possibilities was created where previously the young people, and perhaps the older participants too, thought that no possibilities lay. The contrasting and mutual power relations practiced within the community offered everyone a different knowledge of themselves and their own power in relation to others. Camas lived intentionally and explicitly by these values embracing justice as a central theme. This, in turn, created a radically different lifestyle that was offered to visitors in ways that allowed them to engage with it holistically. There was much to talk about on such an unusual experience and the immediacy and authenticity of this lifestyle provided a rapid way into a discourse between the residents and visitors. Importantly, the co-construction of a programme for each retreat meant that the educational discourse was maintained on each retreat and the young people experienced being participants in this discourse.

From the perspective of the Stoneleigh Group, what worked so well was that so much of this was relevant to their aims. There were a wide range of activities with which to engage including cooking, growing and eating food, decision making, composting toilets, swimming in the sea to wash, the lack of electricity, making their own entertainment, and the unusual belief systems of the hosts. The necessity of working to achieve the basics, and of working collectively, provided the means by which the community demonstrated some of their core values and drew the visitors into their world. The politics of community life arising out of how work was shared and rewarded, and how issues were resolved, provided opportunities for the visitors to discover that previously taken for granted views about the world around them and their relationships with it were, as Mac described it, ‘not written in tablets of stone’ [FN-C05(0600)].

Importantly, the evidence indicates that the diversity of things to which to respond and ways in which to do it, in action and in conversation, were critical for engaging so many disparate individuals with widely different developmental needs. In Bernstein’s terms, I

would suggest that this can be understood as providing for a range of recognition codes in the backgrounds and circumstances of the young people. I would argue that the rapid development of trust and the space made available for reflection facilitated this aspect of the experience. As Rose stated

The experience of just having time to think about yourself I found to be really useful and positive. I am normally rushing around and I am too busy to spare time for me so being on the residential showed me a new way of living. The community feeling at Cae Mabon really helped me to settle in and I felt more comfortable and relaxed around the dinner table there then I do with my own family.

[E-M-R03(7604)]

The contrasting lifestyle of the community, then, engaged the young people visiting the retreats in exploring new perspectives on their identities. The mutual power relations and the role everyone took in constructing the programme on each retreat offered an experience to the young people of themselves that was not only different but valued them and encouraged them to voice their experiences.

Constructing and Reconstructing Identity

Many young people used the retreat experience as an opportunity to give an account of their lives, as they understood them, before the Stoneleigh Project began. This covered a wide range of aspects from the personal, social, and public domains of their lives. The facilitators and mentors describe in the course reports how one to one conversations concerning personal issues were major aspects of their work during the retreats. The young people initially treated these stories as though they were historical and had no current significance on their lives. Typically, however, matters would emerge later in the narration that were still problematic and, up until that point, perceived as not open to influence through the actions of the young person. One young person, Beth, described how a walk over the moor with the facilitator gave her the chance to discuss for the first time with anyone other than a doctor her recent discovery that, at 14, she was pregnant. She

described how she had to decide whether or not to have an abortion and how talking it over, being listened to, and sharing it with a group she now trusted, was helping her.

These were not passive retellings of their life stories. The retreat was experienced as a space in which what Labov (1972) would term ‘complicating factors’ in the lives of the young people were evaluated. All three domains, private, social and public, were significant to the young people in reviewing old identities. Attention was often placed on the elements in their stories that they considered negative, for instance Beth’s unexpected underage pregnancy. Others topics included issues with parents, addictive behaviours, educational failures, and painful personal relationships. Rose used her retreat to reflect on her relationship with her family:

Cae Mabon really helped me to see things in my life that I had been blocking out. It gave me the courage to be me and to see who I really am, I may not of faced up to who I am but at least I am half way there. ... This made me realise that I had to make more of an effort with my family and get them to make more of an effort with each other.

[E-M-R03(7604)]

Narratives often concerned matters that were intensely personal and were considered by the young people and their mentors as highly significant in the young person’s transition to adulthood. In some cases they might be thought of as, using Furlong and Cartmel’s (1997) metaphor discussed in Chapter 4, a stalled car journey. Others could be described, using the same metaphor, as cul de sacs or drivers without knowledge of a reverse gear. Yet others, such as the one above, described major forks in the road. Extending Furlong and Cartmel’s metaphor, some young participants could also be understood as inexperienced drivers or simply lacking some or all of the map for the journey.

However, the participants claimed that the process of telling the story to an individual or group on the retreat made a difference. The interpretation of events would sometimes reconstruct the experience, as Rose recounts above, in a way that made the storyteller feel

better, or with a new ending that allowed for some action to be taken in the future. As with Rose and Beth above, many of these conversations were thought by the young people to lead to a transformation of the problem from a position of denial or impotence to one of acknowledgement and empowerment. They were also thought to have the potential to reconstruct the meaning and the trajectory of the stories. As Taniguchi, Freeman and LeGrand-Richards (2005) claim, what they would term fractional sublimation brought about by the circumstances of the young person prior to the retreat, led on to reconstruction of identity and growth, with the right support.

It was not only the retreat community and its way of life that empowered the young people to reflect on their life stories. As Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) suggest, the physical landscape played a role in the participants becoming ‘authors’ of the experiences they were having. In most cases this involved personal moments of meaning-making projected on to the landscape as the following example illustrates.

Justin had taken an interest in Staffa and Fingal’s Cave from his first arrival at Camas. The island lies five miles to the north and a boat trip with a local fisherman from Iona, Max, had been offered weather-permitting. The trip took place in exciting sailing conditions and a group were able to land on Staffa and walk into the sea cave. Justin was overwhelmed by a coincidence. The day of his landing was the first anniversary of a commitment he had made and maintained to be drug-free. That commitment had been made on the Giant’s Causeway in Northern Ireland; a headland with the same hexagonal basalt columns as Fingal’s Cave. That evening one of the resident community told the story of Fingal, the giant emphasising the link between the two features in Justin’s mind. He recounted the effect on him at the meeting in the room of the nets the following evening. He then made a new commitment to work with the voluntary organisation he was with to find and bring into rehabilitation other drug users.

FN-C05(0600)

Other techniques that supported these accounts included the reflection times in which, like Rose described in the extract above, young people could gather their thoughts. The creative activities were also widely used in this context. They were offered as ways to express in sculpture, or another art form, significant events in the lives of the young people. These would then be used as a visual aid with which to tell a life story. For example, Paul created his own ritual (below) that he invited others to witness and then to join in.

Paul had become very quiet since a session run by a Mull resident artist Emma. During this “mandala exercise” participants had been invited to use the results of beach combing to create below the high tide mark a design that represented who they were and where they were going. Many took part and the session lasted several hours, finishing with a gallery. However Paul did not show his work. That evening in the meeting in the room of the nets he was animated, asking if anyone wanted to join him in lighting a fire on the shore and throwing into it scraps of paper on which they were invited to write all the things about who they wanted to leave behind. Everyone liked the idea. The fire was lit and, as people threw their papers in, they started to name the things written on them. No one left until the rising tide put out the fire and washed everything away.

FN-C05(0600)

The retreat community and the spaces they inhabited became storied landscapes. They offered places where the young people claimed to come to perceive their personal and social worlds as mutable rather than fixed. They could define or ‘story’ it rather than be defined or ‘storied’ by it. The young people could perceive themselves as agents within and not determined by their situations. Narrative was being used as a form of evaluation. Past experiences were judged as were past responses. At a deeper level the values that underpinned these interpretations of events in their lives were also being explored and evaluated through the process of narration. New values were being tested with which to reconsider old meanings. Narration of past events, current experiences and future intentions were the most significant pedagogic processes at work during the retreats. The neutral but inspiring landscape, the culture of respect, the contrasting community values, and the unplanned programme all supported these essential conversations.

I would argue that narrative also had a significant part to play in the emergence of new aspects of the young people's identities during the retreats. The diversity of recognition codes available through the retreat programme was matched I would claim by a range of ways to express new self-knowledge. The weakly framed and classified programme provided significant and varied opportunities for the young people to find what Bernstein would term an 'expression code' to suit them. This led to what Bernstein would understand as the conditions in which the young people felt able to use the realisation rules available to them on the retreats. By this Bernstein meant that the student would find within the educational programme forms of knowledge that suited an identity with which they felt comfortable.

The evidence from Brad and Rose illustrates how young people used the retreats as opportunities for realisation. Both young people used the retreat and the trusting relationships within the retreat communities to tell their life stories as did others reported in Chapter 10. Despite some of these stories containing significant personal distress, the effect on the young person was typically one of excitement. Rose described how this was because she felt she had been listened to and that somehow this made her earlier experiences feel like they had become a part of her past. The retreat and the story telling were acting symbolically as a step away from earlier problems.

Once a step had been taken away from elements of their lives that were perceived as restraining them, I described in Chapter 10 how Brad and Rose used the retreats to develop and express a new sense of themselves. They were both able to do this in physical and social forms of expression. Rose also made extensive use of metaphors drawn from the natural setting of the retreat to express her developing narrative. This phenomenon Taniguchi *et al.* (2005) claim is important in the process of fractional sublimation. They describe it as the process of shedding facades that have been adopted by the individual on the basis of what they believe society expects them to be like.

I would argue that, in the case of the young people involved in the Stoneleigh Project the evidence would suggest that 'society' was represented in some form by social and family

networks and that the young people were attempting to resist reproducing the expectations of those networks. Brad was attempting to escape the identity he held as a member of a gang. Rose was trying to move beyond what she perceived as her family's limited expectations of her. Justin's account above provides another example of this process, in his case using the landscape of the retreat symbolically to represent personal transformation. In that case, Fingal's Cave became a landmark in his process of drug rehabilitation.

The young people used the retreats to evaluate their life stories. This often resulted in situations in which the young people expressed the story in ways that repositioned themselves as actors with more power. They would frequently suggest resolutions to the elements in their stories that they understood as problematic or restraining. The narrative process was a central pedagogic aspect of these developments. Further, the young people also used narrative to express new identities within the experiential and social world of the retreat.

Experiencing Agency

As the young people took more powerful roles in their narratives of their lives I would argue that they were experiencing, within the world of the retreat, an enhanced sense of agency in relation to their own identities. I have described it above by suggesting that the young people felt like actors in their life stories, or, more accurately for the current metaphor, authors of aspects of their narratives. I have suggested that much of this sense of power came from evaluating in their own terms what they thought about aspects of their life stories and being amongst a group of people who, by listening affirmatively, provided some authority for their views.

From the participants' point of view this authoring was a significant aspect of the retreat programme that gave them a sense of power and agency in their lives concerning how they were understood both by themselves and by others. I would argue that the construction and reconstruction of narratives in embodied and oral forms and within the social learning context of the retreats was the most significant way in which old knowledge of the self was reworked and new knowledge was integrated into the identity of a young person.

The abseil incident described in Chapter 10 provides an illustration of how vigorous some of the young people were at expressing a new sense of themselves and their power to define their own identities. It also illustrates the role of experiential action mediated by social interaction in the construction of the meaning of the events.

From the theoretical point of view of Bernstein (1996) the narrative process gave voice to the meaning that each participant was making of their own particular experiences and its effect on their identities. This learner-centred construction and application of knowledge was, I would claim, the central pillar of the weakly framed pedagogy of the retreats.

Recounting personal narratives was an effective method for helping young people gain a sense of agency. They recounted their stories in ways that evaluated them from their own perspective, gave the events significance in a way that meant something to them, and repositioned themselves in the narratives as actors and authors. In some cases, new identities were tried out in action within the retreat community. The positive regard that was a feature of the retreats, in other words an approach that gave value to the self-knowledge of the young person, endorsed these emerging identities.

Learning Narrative Skills

The evidence that was reported in Chapter 10 provides a rich picture of a curriculum that was developed by each young person for his or her own purposes. Whilst the core curriculum was described by the Stoneleigh Group as an opportunity to develop your identity, each individual had a unique history, trajectory, and learning needs in relation to this. For example, some, such as Gordon, found the experience of the alternative lifestyle and values of the community created new possibilities of relationships that were both accepting of his sexuality and not experienced by him as oppressive or abusive. For others, such as Rose or Steve, developing new social networks and learning new skills for relating to old networks was transformative. This gave them a new knowledge of more adult and empowered selves. For others, like Brad and Clive (see Chapter 12), new knowledge of themselves was gained in an embodied way through the community and outdoor activities. In addition they gained new knowledge of themselves through the regard of and feedback

from others. In many cases a mixture of these elements was significant. Such diversity of knowledge uniquely acquired and made meaningful by each individual is at the heart of Bernstein's concept of a weakly classified curriculum.

From the perspective of narrative, one set of skills stood out from the data for this research. This was the ability to critically review and reconstruct life stories and to develop and articulate new ones. This, of all the curriculum areas, supported the transformative potential of the experience by helping many of the young people articulate, either through action or in conversation, the unfolding narratives of their lives.

Learning how to recount these stories and how to value the telling of them was an important skill that many learned on retreat. Listening to the stories of others was a key pedagogic device to teach these skills. The young people then experimented with a variety of ways to express their stories. The accounts were given in a wide range of contexts. They included informal and spontaneous one to one conversations with a person of their choice, such as the moorland walk for Beth recounted above, and rituals, such as that constructed by Paul especially for the purpose and with an invited audience. I would argue that a sense of agency was a significant outcome at the heart of the narrative experience. Narrative provided a way for the young people to understand their life stories as unfolding and mutable. They learned to think that the meaning of past experiences could change and the narrator could retell old stories and develop new ones as guides and aspirations for the future.

Transformation

This research is interested in considering whether or not these experiences and their impacts on the identities of the young people, can be understood as transformative. As has been discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, transformation is contextual. It matters what is transformed and from whose perspective.

I have argued in this and the last chapter that the retreats were radical in their educational provision in that they did offer an educational programme that, in Bernstein's terms,

created new possibilities for identity construction. The evidence suggests that this can have an effect on both the young people's understanding of the past as well as their hopes for the future.

In relation to their pasts I would claim that many young people, including all those presented as part of the evidence in this thesis, experienced transformations in relation to their understanding of, and power in relation to, their personal and social histories. The focuses of these transformations were many and varied and particular to each young person. The impact of the experiences were inspiring for the young people and contributed significantly to feelings of being released from or escaping key aspects of their lives that were responsible for keeping them in marginalised positions.

In many cases the retreat experience also contributed to a transformation of their expectations of themselves in relation to the personal, social, and public domains of their future lives. From the point of view of the Stoneleigh Group's aspirations for the development of agents of social change the outcomes at this stage were more mixed. Some, such as Gordon, imagined reproducing the social norms of the worlds they had lived in through their choices in education and work. Others, such as Justin and Rose, wanted to contribute to professional endeavours to support other marginalised young people.

At this stage none declared an interest in tackling social issues by addressing what were perceived as the causes of the problems within society itself. This was perceived as disappointing by the partners as this was a central aim of the Stoneleigh Group. Some young people, with the support of their mentors, identified that they needed further support to continue the work on their identities that they had begun. The most common version of this was the take up of the opportunity to return to the Stoneleigh Project retreats in a new role. Several young participants returned as mentors or, in the Cae Mabon and Ennerdale retreats, as host community members. Two later returned for a third and, in one case, fourth time as facilitators. A number of the young people aspiring to be youth workers chose this option including Rose and Steve. This had a radical element to it that I would argue could be considered socially transformative. In these instances the nature of power in

relationships between adults and young people was being modelled differently to that which the young people reported experiencing in their childhood relations with adults. In this way the mentors could claim that they were breaking the potential reproduction of hierarchical power relations between these emerging young adults and other young people by providing learning experiences and professional development that modelled equitable relations of power.

Conclusion

The young people became involved in the construction and re-construction of their self-knowledge that was the central purpose for the retreats. First of all, the embodied and experiential way of offering the curriculum to the visitors through an authentic lifestyle connected with the recognition codes valued by the young people. This meant that the young people were able to engage educationally with the retreat experience. The social context for explaining and exploring community lifestyle provided a weak framing that gave the visitors considerable opportunities to take responsibility for becoming involved in the lifestyle and especially the meaning it might hold for them. This included the opportunity to express new possibilities for themselves in embodied and experiential ways as well as through discussion. This range of expression codes added to the potential for the approach to work well for a wide range of learners.

Significantly, this research has identified that narrative, in both embodied and oral forms, was critical to the pedagogic approach of the retreats. Learning to tell and retell narratives of life stories was an important skill learned by the young people on the retreats. Telling these narratives had an impact on the sense of agency the young people felt they had in relation to their transitions. Narrative, I claim, gave their identities voice and power giving them the potential to support transformative trajectories in their future life paths.

The evidence also supports the Stoneleigh Group's claims for creating a programme with a learner-centred approach that produces an enhanced sense of agency, and, for many young people experiences of personal and social transformation. It has yet to be seen whether this

effect transfers into the programme after the retreat and the everyday lives of the young people as they negotiate their transitions to adulthood. This is the subject of Chapter 12.

Chapter 12:

The Stoneleigh Project and its Influence on the Lives of the Young Participants After the Retreats

Introduction

The last chapter concluded that many young people felt that they finished their retreats feeling liberated and empowered to act in a variety of ways in their private, social and public lives. As was discussed in Chapter 3, the transfer of learning from residential outdoor education settings to everyday life is thought to be problematic. This chapter begins by summarising the elements of the Stoneleigh Project that followed the retreats. It will then examine whether and in what way the retreats made a difference to what occurred on the Stoneleigh Project programme after the retreats and what were the consequences for the young people.

The Stoneleigh Group set out to provide a programme that supported young people in becoming agents of personal and social change. This chapter will examine how successful the programme was at transforming the distribution of power and resources to which the young people had access. For some of the partners in the Stoneleigh Group empowerment meant supporting young people in realising their personal potential. For the Stoneleigh Group it also meant supporting the young people in challenging the values and practices of society that were perceived as the causes of the inequitable distribution of power and resources in the first place. Whether the young people applied agency in this way and what factors encouraged this to take place will also be considered.

The Stoneleigh Project Programme after the Retreats

Comments in the annual reviews of the Stoneleigh Project indicated that the programme following the retreats was ‘less well developed’ than the Stoneleigh Group’s plans intended and commented on several occasions that this needed to be addressed. This indicated that, whilst the retreat programme might be supporting the aims of the Stoneleigh

Group effectively, the activities of the supporting organisations was less consistent from the Group's point of view. The Stoneleigh Group relied on the mentors and other youth workers within each organisation to support the activities intended to be the focus of the programme at this stage. In practice the young people were supported in continuing the volunteer work they had already been doing. The nature of this work depended on the ethos of each youth work organisation and the opportunities they provided. This in turn had a strong influence on the pathway taken by many of the young participants within each organisation. Whilst the evidence suggests that the integrated curriculum of the retreat programme was student centred, it also indicates that the developmental influence of the voluntary organisations was more in keeping with a collection type curriculum. The participants were most likely to follow a pathway in keeping with the values of the voluntary organisation.

However, for the young people, there was a consistency across the voluntary organisations as they continued to explore their identities in the light of the concepts of the retreats. As a result the diversity of the trajectories that resulted from the Stoneleigh Project retained a coherent meaning for the participants based on this collective experience of the retreats. The young participants continued to report that they felt a sense of agency in their lives and described the outcomes in their personal, social and public worlds in favourable terms, frequently referring to the retreat experiences as pivotal in supporting them in the making of these choices.

Diagram 1 below is based on an analysis of the pathways taken by the 65 young participants involved in this research. The 12 participants presented as case studies in this thesis are mapped onto the diagram and represent the various pathways taken by the whole group. A summary of the pathways taken by these 12 young people, and that builds on Table 4 (Chapter 10, p. 280) is given in Table 5 below. The starting point for this analysis is the nature of the social networks available to the participants during the early phases of the Stoneleigh Project as reported by them. In many cases this remained the same as that indicated by the young participants before the programme. For a few, such as Gordon who moved from a strong network within his sub-culture and a chaotic one in the wider world to a fluid network, this changed considerably.

Table 5: Summary of the Effect of the Stoneleigh Project on the Identity and Trajectory of the 12 Case Study Young People

Participant	Social network category.	Social capital prior to Stoneleigh Project: family, education and social networks.	Perceived identity at start of Stoneleigh Project.	Perceived identity at end of Stoneleigh Project.	Trajectory during and after Stoneleigh Project: social mobility, transition type and transition path.
Ben (M)	Fluid	Previously a young person and then a volunteer with a Stoneleigh Group partner.	Recently appointed as full time youth worker.	Youth worker.	Lateral mobility. Personal transformation. New identity more established by Stoneleigh Project. More confident.
Brad (M)	Chaotic	Intermittent family support. Truanting from school. Intermittent social networks including adult contact.	Gang member. Nature boy.	Gang member. Nature boy. More confidence in the latter.	Downward mobility. In transition. Skilful navigator within sub-culture but no sustained exit ramp. Complex road map of transition with no car and no navigation skills.
Clive (M)	Fluid	Family support. Good educational outcomes. Good social networks including adults.	Graduate.	Development trainer.	‘Lateral’ mobility. Personal transformation. Exploring map. Has unusual destination in mind and struggled to find route.
Gordon (M)	Strong within sub-culture. Chaotic outside.	No family links. Poor educational results. No social networks outside of sub-culture.	Gay. Lapdancer.	Student.	Upward mobility. Personal transformation. Stuck in dead end (though originally perceived as a clear and healthy route) then reversed out to find a new pathway and destination. (NB Also shifted from strong to fluid social networks.)
Justin (M)	Weak	Largely unknown.	Truant. Unemployed. Drug user.	Ex-drug user. Volunteer youth worker.	Personal transformation. Returning to previous destination to confirm on the right path. Exploring map with more confidence.

Mac (M)	Fluid	Largely unknown.	Volunteer youth leader.	Youth leader	Personal transformation. Consolidating arrival at destination.
Martin (M)	Weak	Not in touch with family. In sheltered housing. No qualifications or work. Suffers from depression.	Homeless and unemployed.	Unemployed.	Upward mobility. Personal transformation. Found permanent housing. Seeking psychiatric help. Holding on to new friendships.
Paul (M)	Weak	Largely unknown but no educational outcomes.	Truant. Unemployed.	Unknown	Personal transformation. No clear direction but eager to explore. Found the way to begin journey.
Rose (F)	Weak	Restrictive family support. Moderate educational outcomes. Good social networks including adults.	Unemployed. Volunteer youth leader.	Youth leader	‘Lateral’ mobility. Personal transformation. Clear destination but initially unable to get under way. Set out to explore map and found route and a clear destination.
Sarah (F)	Strong	Family support. Reasonable school results. Good social networks including adults.	Daughter, student, aspiring to join police service.	Trainee police officer. Volunteer youth leader.	Reproduced family pathway. Delayed rail journey.
Steve (M)	Weak	Weak family support. Good school results. Poor social networks.	Truant. Volunteer youth leader. Casual worker.	Volunteer youth leader. Casual worker.	Downward mobility. In transition. On car journey but lost way. Sees destinations but not able or motivated to head for them.
Trevor (M)	Fluid	No family links. No educational results. Good social networks including adults.	Truant. Unemployed.	Youth leader.	‘Lateral’ mobility. Social transformation. Clear ‘bypass’ route successfully navigated.

The second element that I have considered in Diagram 1 is the direction of the social mobility of the young participant. I suggest that there were 4 distinct pathways in this context. For the few participants that were recruited with strong social networks the participants reported maintaining and using these networks to achieve an upward mobility

from their marginalised situation to an established educational or work-based pathway. Sarah characterises this path as her description of her restored confidence led to an internalised commitment of the pathway to joining the police service that she initially reported as overly challenging and imposed upon her. This resonates with Evans and Heinz's (1995) 'strategic transition pathway' retaining the train journey approach to Furlong and Cartmel's (1997) journey metaphor. In my view structural factors in her personal and social worlds have retained her advantage in relation to class and professional status. The lack of confidence that she described as placing her at risk was readily overcome and she retained her original strong social networks. It is possible that she encountered and overcame structural constraints in relation to gender but this does not feature in her accounts of her transition.

Those young participants with weak or chaotic social networks followed 2 pathways. A few, characterised by Brad and Steve, described trajectories that can be understood as downwardly mobile moving further away from their aspirations. They can be described as exhibiting Evans and Heinz's (1995) 'wait-and-see transition' behaviours. This small group confirm Bynner's (2005) claims that structural factors remain a dominant influence on the trajectories of marginalised young people. In these cases a combination of historical, family, educational, peer group, geographical and employment factors were all at play.

However, a larger group, characterised by Paul, Rose, Justin and Martin, can be understood as following a lateral pathway. The Stoneleigh Project provided them with an alternative way forward from that which had been problematic. In these cases their weak social networks were the consequences of either family breakdown or social mobility or both and included drop-outs from higher education. As examples of Evans and Heinz's (1995) 'taking chances transition' they illustrate the costs of social mobility and the potential of youth work interventions such as this to support young people at points of personal transformation in their trajectories.

The fourth group, Clive, Trevor, Mc, Gordon and Ben, I suggest had fluid social networks, and also took the lateral mobility pathway. Perhaps best representing Evans and Heinz's

(1995) 'step-by-step transition behaviours'. This group developed effective new social networks and capitalised on them to achieve personal and, in the case of some of this group, social transformation.

The third element in Diagram 1 relates to the aspirations of the Stoneleigh Group to 'create agents of social change'. By and large the Stoneleigh Project did not achieve this outcome. The evidence suggests that the majority, all from the group that I have described as laterally mobile, did achieve a considerable element of personal transformation. Only a few of these, typified by Trevor, became involved in social transformation. I will discuss below how, as indicated above, I think that this was largely due to the collection style approach of the voluntary organisations supporting them. Only those concerned with radical social transformation were able to support young people in acting radically in this way.

In relation to agency and social change two smaller groups were also identified. The first, those I have termed upwardly mobile, and who described themselves as making effective transitions into adult life, can also be understood to have reproduced the social norms of their family following 'conventional' trajectories. It is interesting to note that, like Sarah who represents this group, all these adult roles were concerned with service to others.

The last group are those from weak or chaotic networks and who became downwardly mobile. In my view none of the narratives of this group can be interpreted as transformative or having led to transition to adulthood. Some remained in touch with the Stoneleigh Project, perhaps, like Steve, even becoming dependent on it or on the voluntary organisation hosting them. The remainder, like Brad, as far as can be determined, disappeared from the Stoneleigh Project and any contact with a voluntary organisation. In these cases it is less clear what trajectories they took but, in the case of Brad who I have chosen to represent this group, and for whom secondary data exists from youth workers still in touch with his family and peer group, engagement with support services or family was not maintained, he became homeless again and involvement in the activities of local gangs increased.

Whilst the Stoneleigh Group was only partially successful at achieving its aim of creating agents of social change I suggest that it was an effective programme at supporting young people in fluid networks and some young people in chaotic and weak networks in achieving personal transformation. I also suggest that this was achieved by supporting them in pathways involving lateral mobility. In the cases where participants came from strong social networks the Stoneleigh Project was understood as helping the participants on their pathways even if this did not achieve the goals of the Stoneleigh Group. Of some concern are those participants with weak or chaotic social networks who were not supported in an effective trajectory towards adulthood. A more detailed interpretation of some of the participants developed for this thesis as case studies follows.

Returning to the stories of the four young people described in Chapter 10 (Sarah, Steve, Brad and Gordon) illustrates how, despite diverse personal and social contexts, becoming agents of change in the transformation of their identities persisted as a goal for many of the young people. As with the conversations during the retreats, and as has been commented on in Chapters 5 and 8 concerning the role of informal education and youth work, the narratives they told of their transitions continued to involve the personal, social, and public worlds of the young people.

In Chapter 10, I described how Sarah had wanted to join the police service but thought she was losing confidence in herself. She was afraid this plan might fail. After her first retreat she returned to later programmes, first as a host community member and then as a mentor. She also attended the forums and the second conference as a presenter. Sarah did join the police service.

Sarah claimed the Stoneleigh Project sustained her work ethic as a service ethic at a moment when her self-confidence was failing and her own social networks did not support her. As a result I suggest that she was restored to her conventional trajectory into adulthood. Whilst Sarah's narrative of her experience of the Stoneleigh Project focussed on her public world it also referred to the influence of her social world, her unsupportive friendship group, and her family, on her identity at a critical moment. What it also revealed

in later interviews with her was that her father was in the police service and Sarah was also resolving personal issues of identity as she attempted to define herself in relation to her family. During the first retreat she attended she confided that she was afraid of letting her father down by failing to be admitted to the police service and thought that not applying was a safer path. The first retreat that Sarah attended helped her to restore her confidence in her knowledge of herself as distinct from her family's aspirations for her and so, she claimed, restored her sense of direction. She highlighted the way she was listened to and the way she was treated like an adult as significant impacts on her confidence in this restored sense of self. The later retreats that she attended as a host community member and then a mentor she claimed helped her to develop the knowledge and skills needed to feel capable of tackling the public role to which she aspired.

In the first retreat that Sarah attended her knowledge of her self as worthwhile in her own right was encouraged and respected. In the later retreats Sarah valued the knowledge she gained from performing in roles of responsibility. The youth workers could not have predetermined the content of this knowledge or the meaning attached to it by Sarah. In both situations Sarah had determined what was important to her. In addition, the co-operative inquiry of the evaluation process provided a means by which the value of the retreats, as Sarah understood them, were made explicit by her as her experience was unfolding. In Sarah's view, this active participation by the other participants in working with her on the meaning of the retreats added significantly to the effectiveness of the experiences. Sarah is a good example of the way in which the perception held by the young people of the opportunity and the ability to recount their experiences to significant others was important to them. The narratives told by the young people included their hopes for the future and this was a critical aspect of being able to act on these emerging possibilities as is illustrated by Sarah.

In Chapter 10, I described how Steve had dropped out of university. His involvement in the Stoneleigh Project involved two programmes as a young person and one as a host community member. He also undertook much of the computer-based work for the Stoneleigh Group preparing presentations for its conferences. He attended both of these as a presenter as well as all of the forums. At the conclusion of the research Steve remained a

volunteer with the youth organisation he had been with throughout his involvement with the Stoneleigh Project and was still moving between temporary jobs which he thought of as unfulfilling.

In an interview Steve made a link between his difficult family circumstances and what I suggest were his weak social networks and his perceived lack of confidence. Like Sarah he was successful in education. However, what he believed marginalised him was a combination of his loss of confidence and his feeling that he would not find work that meant something to him. He claimed that the retreats had given him the personal confidence to address certain issues in his family life and that this was, in his view, a step in the right direction. However, whilst he thought that the experiences of the retreat and the shift in his family relations had given him renewed confidence to pursue a youth work career and not return to university, he had yet to be successful at interview. Like Sarah, he claimed that, by returning on retreat, he was developing the skills needed to enter the career of his choice. This was a view shared by the facilitator of the retreats as well as Steve's mentor.

It was good to have Steve back this year and in a very different capacity and see his progress towards leading. Last year he attended as a young person and the Camas experience influenced his choice to leave University after completing his first year in architecture to follow a career in youth work. He had specific responsibilities for the group whilst travelling to Camas, the cash budget for fuel, food and tickets. I also noticed how much he volunteered to run sessions and was paying attention to group management. He said he learnt a lot about the practicalities of being a leader and did not find the residential so relaxing!!

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However, his mentor felt that, unlike Sarah, Steve was developing a dependency on the Stoneleigh Project, as, his mentor claimed, he had not been able to develop new social networks that supported his new sense of himself.

At the conclusion of the research Steve had only managed a partial transformation in his personal life. Outside of the Stoneleigh Project he had been unsuccessful at creating a social network. He can be described as changing his networks by distancing himself from his family so that they became more fluid but also weaker. I suggest that Steve's perception of himself had given him the knowledge to understand his situation but it had not given him the skills or the resources to make all of the changes he desired. It may also be a factor that, unlike Sarah who aspired to a conventional adult work role already established as a pathway to maturity in her family, Steve was attempting to make a break with the expectations and traditions of his family. He thought that alternative social networks to support his own sense of his identity were difficult to construct outside of the Stoneleigh Project until a new job was forthcoming. Whilst Steve, like Sarah, had developed a new self-knowledge he was unable to sustain this identity outside of the Stoneleigh Project.

It is useful to understand the task of the young people after the retreat programmes as a pedagogic task in which they are the educators seeking to inform their social networks about their new identities and aspirations. In this case Sarah was able to renegotiate her identity with her family and friends. Steve, on the other hand, whilst managing to negotiate a distance between himself and his family, was unable to develop the social networks or the communication skills to express himself to these networks. It is also possible these networks, both family and friends, did not have the recognition codes with which to 'hear' Steve and so respond to his attempts to transform himself. There is some support for this idea. Steve's girlfriend prior to the Stoneleigh Project was also a young person involved in the programme; Rose. She recounts how moving on from a relationship with Steve was part of her process of transforming her identity. In her view Steve was part of what had been restraining her from moving forward. This suggests that Steve may have been unable to express the difference he felt within himself to others. For Steve, and young people like him, the Stoneleigh Group or the voluntary organisation he was a member of, provided critical social networks that maintained his sense of himself but were unable to support him in developing networks for himself until, it was thought, he found an appropriate job. Work, for Steve, was a significant, perhaps an essential, mechanism for bringing about the social mobility he desired.

Chapter 10 introduced Brad as a homeless gang member with a love of the woods. On the retreat he rarely spoke and would not make eye contact yet he attended the second conference as a presenter before disappearing, it is believed, back into his homeless state.

Brad had rejected the public (educational) and personal (family) worlds that failed to provide him with support. Youth work has provided an intermittent substitute. His mentor claimed that, for Brad, natural history was a way to sustain a positive connection in his mind with his father at the same time as experiencing himself in a more positive way. Brad provides another example of the unpredictability of what knowledge will be of value in the Stoneleigh Project curriculum and for what that knowledge will be valued. It also illustrates how the retreat was nevertheless able to respond to Brad's needs and to support him in both his personal and social worlds. It was able to do this alongside people from widely different backgrounds and learning substantially different things from the Stoneleigh Project.

However, what I suggest is that the chaotic networks of his family and peer group continued to disrupt efforts to help him. The benefits that Brad saw in the Stoneleigh Project and the voluntary organisation offering him continued support lasted for over 6 months. After that his mentor lost touch with him, his father was reported to have evicted him again, and it was thought he was living homeless and had returned to using and selling drugs. It is not entirely clear but probable that Brad did not transform his personal circumstances. The networks holding him to a life he considered dysfunctional may have been too strong and the new ones too weak. Nevertheless his mentor, Ian, was not disheartened. In his view he believed it would take several attempts for Brad to escape from his situation. What mattered, he claimed, was that the knowledge of a person Brad wanted to be had been developed, rehearsed, and liked by Brad and that he knew that there were places to go where he could be like this. Brad still lacked the confidence and sufficient skills to maintain his new networks or express his new sense of himself to sustain a different trajectory on his own. Perhaps the step from one social network to the other was too big without some support to help him to reject that path. Ian was basing his optimistic view on his knowledge as a youth worker that, for young people in Brad's

situation, another crisis was very likely to re-introduce him to the professional services that could pick up the work with him again.

Gordon was the gay lap dancer introduced in Chapter 10. My notes recount a period of his involvement in the Stoneleigh Project after the retreat programme in which he had participated. I had been staying at Camas in part to observe a Stoneleigh Project retreat and in part to attend a Camas advisory committee meeting to report on some aspects of my evaluative work for them.

I, along with several members of the Camas community, was accompanying the members of the Camas advisory committee in the minibus to the ferry terminal on their way back home. It was raining steadily as it had been all day. Heather was driving. A few miles down the road we saw a strangely dressed figure looking very bedraggled. It was Gordon. He was dressed in his 'goth' clothes of leather boots and trousers hanging with chains and dotted with studs. The only other item of clothing he wore was a black string vest. His face was made up with black makeup and his hair badly dyed black. The dye and makeup were running down his face and neck. He was clearly very cold. His thumb was out to hitch. When he saw that it was the Camas minibus stopping he gave a huge smile and quickly accepted the ride even though it was going to the ferry before returning to Camas, a journey that would take a couple of hours.

He sat between me and a member of the Camas committee. First he explained that he was running away to Camas. Having landed on Mull he couldn't remember if Camas was to the left or right and how far. He had already spent several hours in the rain hitching in both directions, each time a little bit further hoping to see something he recognised or meet someone who knew where Camas was. He was keen to tell us how, unlike home, nearly every car had stopped and offered him a lift and how friendly everyone was chatting to him.

He then told us why he was running away. He explained that he was trapped in a personal and work situation because he needed a place to stay and money. His

partner was the owner of the club and, despite many promises, never gave him more responsibility or enough money. He was becoming suspicious of his partner's motives and felt exploited more and more. He said he was beginning to think that, although he liked dancing and the feeling he got because he was good at it, the more he felt comfortable about being gay the more he felt what he was doing was seedy. So this morning he had decided to run to Camas and planned to ask to stay for a while until he could sort out in his mind what he wanted to do.

At the ferry terminal the committee member who had been sitting beside Gordon and, along with me, asking gentle questions and encouraging him to talk, took me aside and commented that he had told Heather to send him home. He stated that this was a good example of the kind of young person that he did not want to see crossing the boundary between being a guest at Camas and becoming a host community member. Back at Camas Gordon washed all the dye and make up off by plunging into the sea and changed into borrowed jeans, T-shirt and sandals. He was unrecognisable.

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Heather did invite him to join the community. He stayed for the remaining three months of the season. A year later he applied and was accepted to read history at a London university. Gordon was the only young person from the Stoneleigh Project to ask to join the Camas host community after a retreat there.

For Gordon, who was described in Chapter 10 as struggling with his sexual identity and attempting to break free of a situation that he was increasingly coming to understand as abusive, the different social networks offered at the retreat provided a way to break out of his situation and re-orientate his life to one that supported a different identity. In this case Gordon was marginalised because of his sexuality and not because of his social or educational background. The crisis in his personal life was a sufficient trigger for him to use his skills to find a new social environment and to articulate his hopes for himself. In this case the social world he had run away to join was a potential problem as some members of that world were prepared to judge him inadequate or inappropriate as someone

who might join it. There was an attempt to uphold the social norms that would maintain the marginalised position of a gay man in society. This highlights how significant and unusual the power and equity relations at Camas and on the other Stoneleigh Project retreats were in creating new possibilities for some marginalised young people. Once Gordon had re-orientated himself, he applied for and gained a place to read history at a London university. It is interesting to note that, given the violent nature of his personal history, his special interest was in the history of violence.

The trajectories after the retreats were particular to each individual. For some, such as Sarah, the Stoneleigh Project volunteer work with the partner organisation was fulfilling and demanding. Others, such as Gordon, moved on to new situations relatively quickly and described these new roles as most significant for them. A few, such as Steve, despite finding the situation incongruent with their aspirations, remained where they were and described themselves as still feeling powerless to influence their circumstances. In Steve's case, his mentor reported that he felt that his trajectory, whilst still weak held more potential for a constructive outcome at some future point as a result of his experience of the Stoneleigh Project.

According to the mentors these various pathways were not determined by the efforts or the approach of a particular mentor or organisation. Rather, the mentors claimed, they appeared to reflect a sense of direction on the part of the young person. Sometimes, as in the case of Steve, the lack of apparent change in relation to work masked bigger changes that were occurring within the personal or social life of the young person. Sometimes, as in the case of Brad, they reflected influences on the direction of a young person that appeared stronger than the youth organisation could challenge. The follow-up programme was thus understood to be more haphazard than the Stoneleigh Group had hoped.

That the pathways taken by the young people were thought of as steered more by decisions taken by them than by opportunities provided by the youth organisations they belonged to were perceived by the Stoneleigh Group as a weakness in their programme. However, this was not the perception of most of the young people. Many of them reported this as a

strength of the programme. They perceived the act of taking responsibility for finding a direction in life as an important outcome of the Stoneleigh Project. Many of them claimed that, at their ages, moving on from a youth organisation was an important next step and a positive outcome.

This suggests that the philosophy of the Stoneleigh Group, whilst distinctive in the retreat programme, was less effective at influencing practice within each partner organisation. The interpretation of the evidence summarised in Diagram 1 and Table 5 contradicts the beliefs of the mentors and the Stoneleigh Group. As indicated above I would argue that, once the young people and their mentors were within the culture of their host organisation, the philosophy of that organisation re-asserted itself in relation to the follow-up opportunities. The exception to this was the follow-up weekends. These were well attended by young people and mentors. The young people regarded them as a critical space in which to continue to develop and express personal narratives and to recount any personal actions that had already occurred. This was a view endorsed by the mentors and facilitators.

The narratives given above have been chosen to illustrate the range of responses that young people had to the Stoneleigh Project retreats. In Brad's case the effect was like that of a respite from a troubled identity. In Steve's story some personal transformation took place but was difficult to sustain. In Sarah's accounts the young person was supported in reproducing her expectations for her trajectory to adulthood. In Gordon's situation that trajectory was substantially transformed. However, in every case the young people claimed to have benefited from the power to develop, express, and have confirmed knowledge about themselves, their personal and social worlds, and their visions for their futures. As Bernstein suggested, the young people experienced the integrated code of the retreat programme as giving them the power to construct and give meaning to their developing self-knowledge.

I would suggest the Stoneleigh Project provided a handrail for the pathway for all four groups of young people, though this may have been more effective in some groups more than others. I would argue that it restored or sparked off a sense of agency for them in the

construction of their adult identities. I would claim that the approach of the retreats had the potential to support the young people in their trajectories to a significant degree. However, whether this support led to the reproducing or the transformation of the social order was substantially influenced by the approach of the voluntary organisation supporting the young person during the follow up programme. It is this outcome, which I explore next, that will determine whether the Stoneleigh Group's claims to a radical approach and a radical outcome are justified.

Agents of Personal Change

An additional narrative of the post-retreat phase from the research I conducted in the later stages of the Stoneleigh Project illustrates further the way in which young people felt they had more agency and how they expressed this to transform their trajectories to adulthood. In the first account the transition of Rose (see Table 5) involved her personal, social, and public life. Diagram 1 indicates how her pathway characterises those participants with weak social networks who became laterally mobile and who, I suggest, achieved a significant degree of personal transformation finding a pathway to adult life congruent with their values.

Since I have been back from Cae Mabon so much has changed in my life because I took control of my life. When I was at Cae Mabon I had already put my house up for sale and was considering doing something with my life but I had not decided what. Whilst on the residential I chatted with a lot of different people about what I enjoyed and what I wanted to do in life and it helped me realise that I wanted to live in the peak district. The talks that I had with people gave me the inspiration and courage to take control of my life and to change it because I was unhappy. As soon as I got home from the week I applied for a job at the Endeavour Sheffield office and here I am now working and living up here. It was really hard at first to move away and leave behind all my friends and family and the social circle that I had been living in. I knew I wanted to be here but I was unsure whether or not I was strong enough to see it through. Every time I felt lonely or upset I would think about Cae Mabon and the magical experience that I had and it helped me to be think more positively towards life again. I am very much enjoying my new life in the Peak District, my job

is great fun and really challenging and have made lots of new friends by joining different outdoor clubs. I believe that if had not been on the Stoneleigh residential I would never of found the courage within myself to move away.

Another aspect of my life that has changed is that I decided to go and meet my really grandparents so they could tell me all about my real father. I have known form the age of eighteen that my dad was not my biological father. At the time when I found out I was very hurt and upset and I didn't want anything to do with any of my family as I felt that they had betrayed me and that everything was a lie, I just didn't know how to trust them anymore. I managed to come to terms with it and start living my life again. I never really thought about my biological father until I was at Cae Mabon. It was the night of the solo and I chose to go up into the woods, I wasn't sure if I would stay out all night so I thought I would just see how I went. I as led on the floor in my sleeping bag looking up at the trees swaying in the wind and listening to the wind hollowing and the rain falling around me. When I started to think about my family and the relationships I have with them all and the dynamics in which we all work. When I started to think about my biological father, I suppose I had never really thought about it before, as I knew it would hurt and I would get upset. This time though I felt so relaxed and at peace with myself that it just felt natural to think about him. I started asking myself questions, like I wondered if I had any of his characteristics or looks and if I had any half brothers or sisters. I suddenly started to panic and decided to go back down to Cae Mabon for the rest of the evening. It took me a while to get the courage to think about the subject again but when I did I finally decided that I needed to know about him, so I knew who I really was and where I came from. I thought it would answer a lot of the unanswered questions that I had been asking myself all my life. So I talked to my mum about it and she helped me get in contact with my real grandparents. (As my biological father had died when I was younger). I have been to see them and I spent hours listening to them talk about my father and this whole other family that I have. I had so many questions to ask them but when it come down to it I just sat there shocked and unable to speak for most of the night. I have kept in touch with them through email and I will be going to see them again soon to ask all the questions that are buzzing around it my head.

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This narrative, together with those previously reported, highlight a number of themes related to the impact of outdoor and personal development programmes on the identities and trajectories of young people. These are reviewed below.

The Significance of Overt Intention

In Chapter 3 I discussed the claims made by a number of authors that the transfer of learning does occur and does contribute to the construction and re-construction of identity. These authors claimed it is supported by certain conditions prior to and within the outdoor experience. Both Sibthorp (2003) and Tucker (2003) claim that having a specific intention, in the case of the Stoneleigh Group, the questions ‘who am I, what do I believe in and where am I going?’, is a significant factor in constructing meaningful outcomes from an outdoor course. In my research every young person had the three questions posed by the Stoneleigh Project in the front of their minds whenever the retreats came up in conversation. They were typically used unsolicited in informal and formal interviews and in focus groups to frame the discussions during and after the retreats and especially on the follow-up weekends. They were also widely used in daily discussions and, on the later retreats, to provide a theme for each day. The participants claimed that these questions not only provided a focus for learning but also encouraged them to act on what they had learned.

The Role of New Social Networks

Neill and Dias (2001) comment on the value of both peers and adults in supporting learning that leads to the re-construction of identity and the resilience of that identity. I would argue that the narratives quoted in Chapter 10 provide examples that were typical of new or developing identities that the young people believed were supported by new relationships with peers and especially the adult mentors. A few summaries support this claim.

Sarah’s restored trajectory to a career in the police service I suggest could be described as being facilitated in large part by what Neill and Dias (2001) term resilience that she developed through the new social networks in the Stoneleigh Group and her emerging role

within those networks. Brad's emerging and fragile identity was supported for a while by the initial encounter with new and different people and then sustained by the relationship with his mentor. Gordon's trajectory from gay lap dancer to history student was supported initially by the retreat and then sustained by his time as a member of the Camas host community. Rose's career as a youth worker was supported by several key people with whom she built friendships on the first retreat. They supported her whilst she addressed unresolved issues with her family and then continued to support her growing identity as a youth worker until she obtained her first post.

As outlined in Chapter 3 Sibthorp (2003) agrees that social support is critical to the process of learning transfer and claims that the opportunities that a social group creates for feedback, discussion, and analysis amongst peers are especially significant. The popularity of the follow-up weekends indicates that the Stoneleigh Project participants also valued social opportunities. My observations would support Sibthorp's claims for the role of peer social interaction in support of learning transfer, especially the follow-up weekends; a view endorsed by the mentors and facilitators.

Sibthorp claims that if these peers are new and different people this enhances the chances of a different identity developing. Tucker (2003) also concurs with these authors adding that the presence of adults on the programme who come from and will return to the place where the young people come from is an important aid to the transfer of learning, a view supported by the many comments from young people about the role of the mentors during and after the retreats. Tucker also claims that trust, support, and encouragement are important aspects of the social life of an outdoor course. In her view friendliness, calmness, peacefulness, and a warm welcome are some of the elements that help to provide a context for these characteristics to emerge.

The Stoneleigh Project findings would support all the claims made by the above authors for the ways in which social support and social learning contribute to learning transfer. Within the contexts of agency and transformation the particular social processes involved,

and the consequences of the transfer of learning to the lives of the young people, are worth further exploration.

Engaging with an Adult World

Several young people referred to the experience of acting in a more adult way with other adults on and after the retreats as significant in helping them to address issues in their personal lives. Rose is one example as this quotation illustrates.

Being on the residential gave me time to explore some very important questions that I had been putting off asking myself for some time. I am normally too busy doing things to take time out and think about what is really important to me. Although it may be as someone said to me during the week, Maybe the being busy is a diversion so the real thoughts and questions don't get answered.

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The important questions Rose referred to were issues concerning her relationship with her parents. She reported that the Stoneleigh Project had helped her feel more independent by giving her a clear idea of who she was and what she wanted to do. Somehow she felt this, combined with the reflective space and the supportive community, allowed her to confront unresolved issues in her family relationships. She also referred to learning new relationship skills that supported her in confronting these issues. My field notes summarise her narrative of what happened.

I asked Rose if she was happy to say more about the important questions she had thought about. She described her relationship with her mother and stepfather with whom she still lived. She thought it was a good relationship although she felt it was time for her to leave though she was also reluctant to do so. Her solo, she said, had given her the space to think about why she did not want to go. When I asked her for any other news Rose told me that she had applied for a youth work job in a city to the north and had been successful. She was moving next month. Her parents were

going to help find and set up a flat. She was excited and claimed that, without the retreat and the solo, none of this would have happened.

Rose claimed that the experiences she had on the retreats she attended as a young person provided her with a number of opportunities that affected her actions afterwards. For Rose, finding the power to address personal issues with her family released her on a trajectory that led to her moving home and finding work as a youth worker. She attributed this to the Stoneleigh Project and especially the retreat. She claimed that the equitable social interactions at Camas gave her insight into ways in which she could relate to others in a more adult way. She thought it also gave her a chance to practice these relationship styles with others and receive positive feedback about this new identity. The retreat at Cae Mabon gave her the reflective space to restore her vision of herself as a youth worker. It also gave her the chance to review the circumstances in her personal life that she perceived as holding her back. The mentoring between retreats and her later roles as a host community member and mentor provided her with role models and support in her professional plans. Finally, when she obtained her first job, it was this social network that gave her the recognition for her achievement.

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Rose's narrative provides an unusually long example of a young person's relationship with the Stoneleigh Project. Rose claims to have been initially empowered by the adult nature of the relationships on the first retreat that she attended. This contributed to her adopting what she perceived as a pro-active and adult approach to her relationships with her parents, and her boyfriend. Further, she argues that her professional development was largely due to the opportunities and support provided by the Stoneleigh Project. I would argue that this was a vivid but typical experience of the retreat programme that is supported by considerable evidence from many young people and their mentors. In the case of the Stoneleigh Project the remote outdoor retreats were effectively integrated with the everyday worlds of the young people. For many if not most of these young people, they supported them in advancing the development of their adult identities in their personal, social, and public lives.

In my view, the narrative process Rose continued to use between and after the several retreats she attended, and already identified in Chapter 10 as a critical element in the retreat programme, was central to the effectiveness of the transfer of learning beyond the retreat experiences. I will explore the evidence for this further below.

The Narrative Process

Once the retreats were over, many young people maintained a narrative account of their developing situations. If this could not be done with a mentor or another peer who had attended the retreat, then the facilitators or the evaluator were involved through telephone calls and e-mails. For example the unfolding narrative of Rose's story was continued with the evaluator through unsolicited e-mails. It also stopped after the narrative described a major step into a desired pathway, in Rose's case her new job as a youth worker.

I commented in Chapter 3 on the concern in the research and other literature of the outdoor education field that 'qualitative' feedback in narrative form is considered by some to be suspect. The view reported was that there is no direct evidence that the outcomes of an intervention can be attributed to the experience to which it is linked by the narrative. I believe this misses a significant point. If the belief is that the young people are constructing identities influenced by the experiences in their lives then these identities also need to be expressed within the social networks of those people. This expression often takes a narrative form, whether this is physical or verbal, and it needs tangible events to build on. It does not matter in this case whether the new self can be attributed to the experience that is claimed for it. What matters is that the young person thinks that it does and can use the event to construct their ongoing narrative. The examples above suggest that this may be especially significant when the narrative is describing a significant transformation and that this is being shared with a new social network.

The evidence also suggests that, by encouraging the expression of a narrative during and after the retreats, the transformation described in the narrative frequently transferred into action in the everyday worlds of the young people. Sarah re-established her confidence and joined the police service. Rose confronted her parents and found a new home and work she

thought of as meaningful. Brad, for a while, became involved in the outdoors in a way that made him feel better about himself and re-engaged socially. Justin found the strength to continue his resistance to drug use and made a commitment to work as a volunteer to help other drug users enter a rehabilitation programme. Gordon took up his university place.

All these young people, and many more, used ongoing narratives in which they claimed their retreat experiences were significant in enabling them to take these steps. For them, these steps made them socially mobile and transformed their expectations of what was possible with their lives. For example Rose changed the values held by her old family and friendship networks with regard to her gender, living away from home and becoming a home owner, a professional job, remaining single and sexually active; a considerable set of transformations.

It is interesting to note that a number of adults in mentor or host community roles also used the retreats to express their emerging narratives and reported significant life changes following on from the retreats. For example Shaun, in his late 40s, resigned from his work as a youth worker, bought a motorbike and set off to tour the world; a dream he never thought he would realise. He attributed his decision to the realisation that his work would, over time, involve him in roles that were less like that required by the Stoneleigh Project and more like that encouraged by trends in modern youth work like those discussed in Chapter 5. He felt he had better things to do with his life. This evidence arrived in an e-mail and nothing has been heard from him since.

Personal or Social Change Agents

The evidence above shows many circumstances when personal transformations reported by both the adults and the young people involved changing relationships with old networks and building on opportunities with new ones. In addition they reported making changes that they did not previously perceive as possible. From the point of view of the participants they felt able to remove an aspect of whatever was perceived as marginalising them and so denying them access to the adult world. They changed their self-concepts. They perceived the outcome of the Stoneleigh Project to have enhanced what Stoddart (2004) called social

capital and transformed the world in which they felt able to act. As Bernstein put it, the programme ‘altered their consciousness so that they were able to think the impossible’ (Bernstein, 1996, p. 44).

In Bernstein’s terms this would constitute the meeting of the educational rights of personal enhancement and social inclusion. I would argue that this was brought about because the Stoneleigh Project, in partnership with the voluntary organisations, supported the young people through their personal development in gaining access to a more equitable share of power and resources with which to construct adult identities. I would suggest that the programme helped them to tackle for themselves the various issues of marginalisation. It was particularly successful at helping young people to address issues in their family and peer group networks and issues of self-confidence and identity that inhibited a sense of a meaningful and possible direction towards adulthood especially for those who were socially mobile. As a result I would claim that the young people were able to access and capitalise on new and enhanced social networks, volunteer, educational, and work opportunities. In my view the Stoneleigh Project provided support for a group in society for whom institutional support is not currently widely available. However, this support was most effective for those with or capable of developing fluid social networks and engaged in or considering trajectories of social mobility.

For some, transforming the situations of young people instead of reproducing the conditions of marginalisation that they might expect from their backgrounds would constitute a radical educational outcome. The Victorian social reformers discussed in Chapter 4 would certainly have recognised the efforts of the mentors and facilitators to transform the values of the young people as a radical undertaking. It may be for this reason that Phil, as referred to in Chapter 2, with his roots deep in this Christian youth work tradition, claimed that the programme was radical.

However, in relation to the Stoneleigh Project, there are some problems with this claim. Not all the young people were marginalised for the traditional structural reasons of poor social background or educational achievement. Many had achieved success in these terms

and, in some cases, had already become socially mobile as a result. What many in this group claimed to be marginalising them was the lack of meaningful opportunities to engage with the world of education or work. This concern was picked up by Colin in his early thinking about the Stoneleigh Group. For the Stoneleigh Group then, a radical outcome would be one in which the public and social world was also transformed in a way that both reduced the conditions that led to the marginalisation of some young people and also created new forms of education and work that were understood by young people as worthwhile. Achieving such a goal would fully meet Bernstein's third educational right of participation. Young people, through the educational process, would then have an opportunity to both reproduce and transform the social world they were entering. The relationship between such a citizen and the state, would, in Bernstein's terms, be equitable. The established social order would be open to reproduction or transformation by all of its citizens.

Therefore, this still leaves the Stoneleigh Project open to the challenge that they provided a liberal educational programme that, whilst seeming to tackle the effects of marginalisation, simply restored the young people to pathways that re-engaged them with the same world that was responsible for the causes of marginalisation in the first place. From this perspective their actions in that world would simply contribute to further marginalisation and so perpetuate the cycle that sustained the current distribution of power and resources in society. This would constitute another example of what Bernstein referred to as a liberal education that papers over the cracks. What remains to be considered, then, is the degree to which the participants were able to take part as citizens and whether the form of this participation met the radical aspirations of the Stoneleigh Group for creating agents of social change.

Clive, in his mid-20s, provides an example of a young person who used narrative to maintain his desired trajectory that involved introducing change in the world around him. In some instances the opportunity to e-mail his story to a Stoneleigh Group participant or recount it to one other person in collusion with him, as this extract describes, was all that sustained an approach to his work.

Clive attended two retreats, one as a young person and one as a host community member. He also attended the training event for mentors and host community members. He joined the Stoneleigh Group independently of a voluntary organisation in the year after his graduation at a time when he could not determine his path forward. He then found a job as an outdoor youth worker. This was a new role for him. However, he describes it as a role in which he was still too constrained to be the kind of youth worker he wanted to be or practice the ideas that he had acquired from the Stoneleigh Project. He attributed this to the hostility of the employer to 'the 's' word' spirituality. He described how a co-working opportunity on a camping trip created an additional freer space in which he felt able to be different. As elsewhere I have maintained Clive's spelling and removed the names of people and organisations in this extract from an e-mail.

The 'S' word isn't really embraced here at (deleted name). (Deleted name) and myself have been working almost alternate weeks since we started discussing the course -(eon's ago it feels like) So i am embarrassed to say that its not of the ground yet. However like a pebble thrown in a pond I am creating exiting ripples of idears.

None the less, I am proud to say, (and i hope this is ok) I have been using the stuff i learnt at Cae Maborn (and through doing my disatation) In my courses - atleast. Last week was an excellent example.....

It was a 6 day course in the mountains with 14-17 year olds. The Qualified course directer and ML gave me the Full Freedom to 'Do the Process stuff'. I asked "anything?" and he (deleted name) said "yes".

After meeting the group and doing the intial settling in and working and living together stuff with them, I couldn't help but see the obvious process framework for such a mixed bunch of agendas. All i knew at this point was that i had to fit the process stuff into a 3 day expidition.

(have you guessed what i did yet?)

It was a perfect opportunity to suggest the three questions posed at Camas. Who, Where, How... It was posed that one question would be attempted a day, and it was understood that there would be considerable overlap.

The group lapped up the idea and quite bravely went for it.

as well as all the dynamics of the group development and the learning gained from the expedition itself (eg cooking navigating, looking after each other etc...) they got a lot out of it!

the expedition included the following activities as well as on going conversations that took the form of 'active listening on the first day, to moving towards coaching on the last.

1st days activity = (Who am I?) body maps using natural materials.

Aloft the participants to open up and as one of them said 'talk about shit that they don't usually talk about', build on their already growing admiration for the surrounding natural environment, and open up their artistic side to their personalities as a balance to their hard man mountain climbing image.

The Logical levels (environment, behaviours, capabilities, beliefs, values, mission/purpose and spirituality) was offered as a possible way to help answering the days question in a more systematic way.

2nd day = (where am I going) A hour solo. a kind of taster of a solo experience, whilst also holding the days question in mind. (conversely all sorts of stuff came out of this experience for them!) This was done at the high camp under great end by sprinkling tarn, enhanced by a fantastic sun set.

different reasons for solo time were discussed, and in their own time, they decided to bivvy out under the stars. (one saw their first ever shooting stars! and they all saw Mars)

3rd Day = (How am i going to get there) ‘the clensing pool, the hope monument and the two stones’

this was similtainiuosly the funiest and most deepist day of the programme!

they found two stones, one they liked and one they diddn’t like. we met the group at the next meeting point at a tarn (the group were being shadowed on this day to give them more responsibility)

At the tarn the reasons for choosing their particuler stones were disscussed and metofores drawn out that represented the things that would help them get to there destination, (the stone they liked) And the things that would hinnder them getting to there destination.(the stone they diddn’t like)

then, we all stood by the shore line and put our helpfull stone back in our pocket as we would need that to get up glaramara and acheive our destinations in life. Then, we raised are arms as we were going to through our unhelpfull stone in the water. we pretended that we did, then i asked them ‘if you had through that stone in the water, would that meen all that unhelpfull stuff would be fogoton?’” Amixed responce. I gave them an opertunity to try something else instead, but would take more work. we all bent down by the tarn edge and proceeded to clean our unhelpfull stones in the tarn. each time the stone was taken out the water they were to try and see these unhelpfull things about themselves and the the actual stone in a different stone. they were challenged to see the stone in a different way.

after some time i gave them the choice, “ if the stone is now completely usless to you then throgh it in the tarn, if you want to hold onto it and exept it... ect... then put it in your pocket with the other one.

Later at the top of glaramara, thay built a hope monument with there stones on a flast piece of rock as a memorial of how they felt at that moment in time. then a sweet was given to every one, there was an almighty ‘primal scream’ then the sweet touched there stone ‘to get there energy back’ and put in their mouths.

the journey ended with a review at the bottom of the hill just before we returned to the youth hostel.

A night of nice food and comfy beds football and an emotional certificate ceremony, led to a warming farewell, with a backdrop of beautiful misty mountains glazed with the brightest full moon rainbow I have ever seen.

I am a Happy Chappy today and I want to thank you for letting me research and take part in the Stoneleigh group's work.

My aim for the future is to work that way more often - given half the chance.
Big thanks again, hope you don't mind me almost completely ripping off the ideas I learnt from you and the others.

[E-M-C02(7704)]

Clive was able to create for himself a space in which he could experiment with an identity that parted from what he perceived as the mainstream of UK outdoor practice. He used the Stoneleigh Project as a template for this new professional identity and received positive endorsement from a colleague and the group with whom he was working. However, in relation to the employer, Clive acted subversively as the only way to act with what he perceived to be congruence with his emerging identity. The narrative, performed in action with the colluding colleague and in writing with the Stoneleigh Group contact, were all that sustained this identity as Clive attempted to introduce change that was understood by the employer to be too radical.

Clive's account is interesting for the insight it provides on the resistance of the everyday world to change. Clive thought that this resistance was partly due to his approach being simply different. However, he also suspects it is because it redistributed power not only to the employee, but in this case, to the young people on the outdoor youth work programme concerned. Clive's case is doubly interesting in that he described a youth work organisation, though not one of the Stoneleigh Group partners, that was acting to restore

the educational programme to one that, as Bernstein (1996) would have described it, maintained the established order rather than one that transformed it.

Clive went on to enrol for a post-graduate certificate in spiritual facilitation, a course he found out about from the academic leading the course whilst attending a Stoneleigh Group conference.

The evidence from the Stoneleigh Project supports Davidson's (2001) claim that it is the process of attributing meaning to an experience that is the significant aspect of outdoor experiential learning. I would argue that the frequent and diverse opportunities to construct and re-construct identity based on new knowledge of themselves and the world they were in was central to the success of the Stoneleigh Project. Reviewing old self-concepts and constructing new ones, in words and actions, was, I would claim, supported by the narrative process. This process involved experiential and social contexts. It was embodied in action on and after the retreats and it was sustained throughout by frequent dialogue with others who were involved in the programme. Perhaps most of all, these narratives were maintained because they enabled the visions developed by the young people, and other participants too, to be realised. From the point of view of the young people, developmentally it worked. The young people can reasonably claim to have developed these visions and acted on them for themselves. As such the claims made by the Stoneleigh Group to have supported young people in becoming agents of change in their personal lives is supported by this research.

Bernstein (1996) expressed concern about educational projects entering the personal lives of students. He thought that it was unhealthy within a democracy for a public institution of the state that is controlled by state ideology to have a foothold in the private lives of its citizens. The evidence of the Stoneleigh Project is that the private lives of the young people were widely involved in the retreat programmes. However, the evidence also shows that a strong boundary was maintained by some youth workers between the retreats and the rest of the Stoneleigh Project programme. Only the young people and their mentors were aware of this knowledge about the personal lives of the young people. Indeed, the mentors

from these organisations were actively involved in maintaining this strong boundary of confidentiality. This is not unusual youth work practice and so would not have been experienced as unusual by the participants or their organisations.

However, some individuals and one organisation deliberately set out to integrate the emerging values of the personal world of the young people with the public world in which they were attempting to construct an identity and make a living. Bernstein made his claim for strong boundaries in the context of a strong, established ideology. A strong boundary between the personal worlds of citizens and the public world of the state allowed a diversity of ideologies to flourish without being perceived as a threat to the established order. Mills (1959), on the other hand, claimed that private troubles almost always need to be understood and resolved in the context of public issues and that public issues only become meaningful when they are related to private troubles. Mills' view resonates with the position of the Stoneleigh Group in their efforts to support young people with 'private troubles' to resolve these for themselves and also to address the 'public issues' they reflect by becoming agents of social change.

The Stoneleigh Group can be understood as thinking that the established order is or needs to be under threat in a world that can no longer be sustained justly by the current distribution of power and knowledge. It was the Group's view that the boundary between the emerging values of some marginalised young people and the public world needed to be weakened in order that the ideologies maintained in the private world could influence the public world rather than vice versa. Clive illustrates the challenge involved in attempting this. He bridges the gap between young people that became agents of personal change and those that attempted to be agents of social change.

The Young People of the Stoneleigh Project as Agents of Social Change.

The evidence above illustrates that the lives of young people on the Stoneleigh Project were transformed at private, social, and public levels and often all three of these. These changes in their lives sometimes involved the young people addressing issues within their old social networks that were perceived by them as constraining. Some of those with weak

or chaotic social network backgrounds and those with fluid social network backgrounds (see Diagram 1) were then able to capitalise on the new social networks provided by the Stoneleigh Project and the host voluntary organisations. The results of these transitions were new roles providing lateral mobility and so taking them forward on their trajectories towards new adult roles. These trajectories were previously perceived by the young people as beyond their reach or of no meaning. It also supports the claim that the young people perceived that they were the agents of these transformations. They perceived themselves to have initiated and managed the opportunities within and beyond the reach of the Stoneleigh Project and managed their exit from the programme when they perceived its role to have been fulfilled. In many cases the young people attributed these developments in their lives to the Stoneleigh Project and to the retreat phase in particular.

The programme, for young people whose personal transformation meant progressing along conventional educational or employment pathways, as the majority of young participants did, can be understood as a means to social change. The Stoneleigh Project supported a degree of social mobility that they may not have achieved otherwise. This was achieved with an age group where few if any other alternative means of support were available. Young people developed different social networks, entered further and higher education, began professional career paths and moved physically and socially to new geographical areas.

These changes did redistribute power and resources to these young people. They felt in control of their pathways to adulthood; back in the driving seat. In one sense they had become active participants in society by maintaining established social values through their life choices. However, their socialisation, whilst novel to them, had been restored to traditional pathways of identity construction. Their choices, as Bernstein suggested, maintained overall the established distribution of power and control with all its potential for marginalisation. Whilst a highly satisfactory outcome for them this was not the radical outcome the Stoneleigh Group were hoping for.

A number did become engaged in the social issues that were perceived as causing marginalisation. Through their volunteering and professional roles at least 15 young people took on responsibility for projects addressing social issues such as drug use and truancy. At least nine, such as Rose and Clive, became professional youth workers by the time the research was concluded. A further 6 participants from the host community role also became involved in youth issues on a voluntary or professional basis though, as reported above, 1 youth worker and mentor did resign and leave the youth work field. Most of this group of young people set out to tackle the problems caused by the current social order but they did not seek to address the causes of these problems. Clive was an exception.

However, one set of young people did set out to tackle the causes of the issues faced by young people in their community. They did this in both voluntary and professional roles by creating new forms of work for themselves and for others that held to a set of social and environmental values that were in contrast to the values of their community.

Trevor is an example that represents this group (see Diagram 1 and Table 5). On return from the retreat that he attended he set up, with, unlike Clive, the help of the voluntary organisation supporting him, a circus skills training programme for young people disaffected from school or unemployed and not in education post-16. The purpose of the project was to give young people skills they could feel proud of and to exhibit these skills in front of their community and to feel their pride in them. It was highly successful and is still running under Trevor's leadership as of autumn 2006. Trevor went on to take up a professional role with the voluntary organisation directing a project that employed young people to take an eco-friendly bus around the rural communities of the area to provide youth services that rural young people found hard to access. This project is also still running successfully.

Trevor set out to tackle the causes of marginalisation amongst particular target groups of young people. He engaged the community in solving the problem and was contributing to a larger project that, with the community's support and resources, was seeking to transform

the work available to young people and the meaning of that work to them and to the community.

All the young people falling into the same set as Trevor were young people from one voluntary organisation. I would argue that whether the aspirations of the Stoneleigh Project to promote radical social change through the leadership of young people were met or not depended on the ideology of the voluntary organisation the young people were associated with. This claim can be supported further. The young people who took on youth work roles did so within voluntary organisations that had a strong service ethic. Those that took on other employment did so with voluntary organisations that had a strong return to work ethic. In other words pathways defined by the attitudes to the meaning of work held by each Stoneleigh Group member organisation, and outlined in Chapter 9, were followed by the young people.

It is not clear whether young people simply followed the ideology of the organisation they associated with or whether they chose these organisations because they perceived them as congruent with their own values and aspirations. It is possible to say that the 3 young people who used the Stoneleigh Group network to move from one organisation to another did so in order to access opportunities that they perceived as being more in keeping with their aspirations.

Whilst the Stoneleigh Group can claim that they were able to support some young people who already sought to be agents of social change through their respective voluntary organisations they cannot claim to have created agents of social change. In this sense, whilst Eden Community Outdoors does provide a radical programme by the Stoneleigh Group's definition, the Stoneleigh Group did not.

Bernstein argued that the control of any educational site with a radical social or political agenda will be contested by those with an interest in maintaining the established order and so the established arrangements for the distribution of power and resources in society.

Whilst the Stoneleigh Group was, in the end, not responsible for the radicalism of a few of

the young people that participated in the programme, they claimed to be. The next chapter will consider how the Stoneleigh Project, as it began its advocacy work in the wider world of youth work, became a contested site because of this claim.

Conclusion

The transfer of the learning from the retreat experience was supported by a number of pedagogic processes. Among these were the new social networks created by the relationships formed during the retreats and the number and variety of adult roles involved in the retreat together with a focus on adult life such as work and the wider politics of social and environmental justice. Additionally the process of encouraging the development of personal narratives that reconstructed past experiences and current identities played a major part in supporting the transfer of new knowledge, values, and meanings developed by each young person after the retreats. The values that were encouraged by the retreat lifestyle often transformed the identities of the young people in ways that encouraged them to develop the new opportunities provided by the remainder of the Stoneleigh Project. The role of the host community members on the retreats and the mentors before, during and after the retreats were critical in providing this pedagogic opportunity.

In most cases the young people capitalised on their new self-concepts and social networks to initiate personal changes. These directions almost all involved breaking away from concepts and networks that defined them in order to take up new identities and follow new pathways of which the young person was previously unaware or thought to be impossible. Diagram 1 indicates the importance to the Stoneleigh Project of this lateral mobility in achieving these outcomes. The result for the young participants on this pathway was a personal transformation. For some young people these new identities and pathways involved them in supporting other young people who were marginalised through volunteer or professional roles in youth work. They set out to change the circumstances of others, to address the problems caused by the ills of our society but not the causes. For one group of young people involved with Eden Community Outdoors the retreats supported them in developing projects that tackled the causes of marginalisation by challenging the forms of education and work that were perceived by them to be the roots of the problems in their

community. For them the outcome was also one of becoming agents of social transformation.

A smaller group of young participants benefited from the programme though their pathway embedded in a strong social network cannot, in my view, be described as transformative. It nonetheless supported transitions to adulthood understood by the young participants as successful. A second small group of young participants with weak or chaotic social network backgrounds, whilst reporting that the programme was beneficial to them personally, were not successful in achieving a transition to adulthood.

The Stoneleigh Project was, in my view, successful in supporting young participants with fluid and strong social network backgrounds in achieving what they considered to be successful outcomes (see Diagram 1). For those with or capable of developing fluid social networks, a significant element in the process of this success was, I suggest, the encouragement to engage with a pathway I describe as lateral mobility. The Stoneleigh Project was partially successful in supporting those from weak and chaotic social network backgrounds. However, others from these backgrounds remained in need of further support.

I have argued that, whether a young person's agency restored them to a traditional pathway to adulthood that was focussed on self realisation, or one based on addressing social issues, or whether they became agents of social change challenging the norms of adulthood, depended on the voluntary organisation that they belonged to and not on the Stoneleigh Group. As such the Stoneleigh Project can be thought of as radical in the sense that the pedagogy of the programme was novel and political. It can also be viewed as radical in the sense that it supported the social mobility of most of the young people participating giving them a more equitable access to the power and resources of society. However, in its own terms of supporting young people to become agents of social change it did not succeed. Eden Community Outdoors must take the credit for those young people who moved forward in this way. Nevertheless, the Stoneleigh Group did claim to have acted in this way. The consequences of this will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 13:

Ideological Struggles:

the spirituality concept and informal education

Introduction

I claimed in Chapter 2 that there was a ‘second pedagogical relationship’ at work as part of the Stoneleigh Group's piloting activities. This second site developed between and within the partner organisations of the Stoneleigh Group and between the Group and other organisations interested in youth work. The Stoneleigh Project provided the context for this pedagogical discourse. The subject of the discourse was values development for young people and its relationship with the concepts of spirituality and leadership. This, together with the ideas of personal and social transformation and the claims for radicalism in a political as well as an educational context became contentious. This conflict was present throughout the Stoneleigh Project but it had a special significance during the early piloting of the retreats and in the later advocacy work.

The purpose in this chapter is to explore this second pedagogic site. It provides a case study of a group attempting to influence the mainstream practices of education with what they claimed to be a radical approach to informal education that was also aimed at radicalising some young people. It explores the ways in which institutional power and control worked in the maintaining or transforming of the social order at the level of policy making in the youth work sector.

In this chapter, unless the organisation's views are in the public domain, the identity of the organisations referred to, other than the Stoneleigh Group itself, remain confidential. This means that, in some instances, the participants referred to are not identified and the evidence is not presented directly where it might otherwise have been useful to do so.

Spirituality and the Stoneleigh Group Partners

From the start the founders of the Stoneleigh Group had aims and associations with political overtones that led to their interest in advocacy work. The Rank Foundation is committed to the idea of young people being the agents of the rejuvenation of communities. Larry Parsons was the first director. In describing his work to Harris (2002) he drew overtly on Christian influences to explain his approach.

Larry Parsons talks of ‘fanning the flame’ and then protecting it. He talks about “inspiring leadership within the peer group as essential to rejuvenating the community”. He talks about “helping young people who are perhaps unemployed, apathetic and drifting, to dream dreams, to discover that spark within them and to rise up from the ground, and in their turn inspire others, and to show them that they have the power to make life worth living”. All this lies at the very centre of youth and community work and, indeed, education.

This made them natural partners with the voluntary organisations of the Stoneleigh Group many of whom also referred to Christian sources for their inspiration and already received financial support from the Rank Foundation for their work with marginalised young people.

As I have discussed in Chapter 9 the radical approach of the Stoneleigh Group emerged from the thinking of Colin. He wondered if society was in need of transformation not rejuvenation. This interest led him to develop a relationship with the Iona Community and to suggest them as a partner in the Stoneleigh Group and the first provider of the retreats. As their web site states 'The Iona Community ... is committed to seeking new ways of living'. They have a radical agenda of social justice that is inspired by Celtic Christianity and socialist Christian ministry (Iona Community, 2003b). As this quotation from the Iona Community web site (Iona Community, 2003b) indicates this goes beyond the re-creation of the values of society to actions that will help create new values founded on a basis of peace and justice:

The 21st century is now a few years old but all the problems that beset the world in the last century are still with us. The "cold war" may long be over, but wars still rage in many parts of the world and there is a profound concern about a whole range of related issues - the continual widening gulf between the rich North and the suffering two-thirds world of the South; Britain's continuing reliance on nuclear weapons; our lack of commitment as part of the G8 nations to overseas aid; the destruction of the environment wrought by modern life-styles and social and economic priorities; the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; and so much more besides.

As a Community we believe that, if we are to be true to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we must say "no" to the arms race and be prepared to give up nuclear weapons unilaterally. We must also work for peace, by prayer, protest, study, non-violent demonstration, education, reconciliation, and political action towards a more just world. This means a redistribution of the world's resources in favour of the poor and hungry.

The working group has a four-fold focus on security, non-violence, the environment, and alternative approaches to economics (the "new economics"). This working group links with the focus of the Community as a whole by reason of the Community's themes: Poverty, Place and Peace.

As described in Chapter 2, from its foundation the Stoneleigh Group intended to advocate for the spiritual development of young people as agents of social change. The members of the Stoneleigh Group looked for new institutional partners with similar radical agendas to that of the Iona Community to support them in their purpose. Andy was invited to become the independent chair of the management team because of his knowledge of this field. He suggested inviting Brahma Kumaris (BK) to join. Its web site describes BK's role as an organisation committed to personal and social transformation (Brahma Kumaris, 2006):

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University acknowledges the intrinsic goodness of all people. We teach a practical method of meditation that helps individuals understand their inner strengths and values.

A worldwide family of individuals from all walks of life, we are committed to spiritual growth and personal transformation, believing them essential in creating a peaceful and just world.

Acknowledging the challenges of rapid global change, we nurture the well-being of the entire human family by promoting spiritual understanding, leadership with integrity and elevated actions towards a better world.

This development gave the Stoneleigh Project high visibility as BK are widely regarded by individuals and institutions who also believe that this is a time of renewal and transformation including government, church and royal figures. A number of follow up weekends and one of the conferences were held at BK's centre.

The next step, also proposed by Andy, was to invite the Wrekin Trust to act as an independent organisation to hold the overall responsibility for the Stoneleigh Project. This created another link to an institution, this time associated with education, that has a long standing and well regarded role in supporting spiritual transformation (Wrekin Trust, 2005).

The Wrekin Trust is an educational charity concerned with the spiritual nature of humanity and the universe and part of a worldwide movement towards personal and planetary transformation.

The Wrekin Trust, through its earlier work in medicine, has strong links with higher education in particular. This association gave the Stoneleigh Project further visibility particularly through the network known as the University for Spirit (2006). The first presentation about the Stoneleigh Project outside of the Stoneleigh Group was given to a conference of this network.

An Integrated Code and the Threat to Power

Although the outcomes of the Stoneleigh Project were, as I concluded in Chapter 12, varied, the claims made by the management group to the partners in the programme tended to emphasise the more radical aspects. The evidence from reports and minutes together with my field notes from various meetings give a picture of an extended debate amongst the partners concerning what was being achieved, what should be achieved and how this should be described. My notes of discussions in meetings and the first forum event, together with the reports tabled at meetings, indicate that representatives of the partner organisations were comfortable with an outcome described in terms of young people transforming through their own actions their personal circumstances at home and at work. They reacted in more varied and speculative ways to reports describing young people as expressing views or acting in ways that challenged social norms. Whilst such claims indicated that the Stoneleigh Project might be meeting Phil's and Colin's aspirations for it, other partners realised, perhaps for the first time, that the managers of the Stoneleigh Project were serious about their intentions of supporting young people to become agents of social change. Additionally, they realised that the Stoneleigh Project programme might be capable of realising these aspirations.

Referring to Bernstein's (1996) three entitlements of an education for democracy, the partners can be understood as comfortable with a programme that was described as enhancing the prospects of the young people and helping them to become included in pathways to adulthood. They were also happy with claims indicating levels of participation that reproduced the social norms through their choices in education or employment. Reactions were more mixed when claims were made of young people transforming their social worlds if, by so doing they challenged social norms, especially when those norms were endorsed by the purposes and actions of the organisation.

The retreat element of the programme was at the centre of the claims for the radical nature of the Stoneleigh Project. The integrated curriculum approach of the retreats, as Bernstein would describe it and as has been discussed in Chapter 10, together with the particular process and content they offered, was identified by the programme organisers within the Stoneleigh Group as responsible for these early signs of success. This extract from Lucy's

first report as the retreat facilitator illustrates this growing excitement amongst the designers of the programme for the results the retreats were perceived as supporting.

The group had reached the point where they would want to start to define more about how their community was functioning and were ready to start tackling the big questions.

The experience was powerful and developmental and this particular mix of people wanted to have personal choice about their use of time.

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Bernstein claimed that, for a curriculum constructed under an integrated code to be successful, a number of conditions would need to be met. The first of these he termed 'an integrating idea' (Bernstein, 1971, p. 106 – 107). He held that an overarching idea was necessary to hold together in some organising principle the unusual, loosely bounded and changing bodies of knowledge that emerge as the curriculum within the integrated code. He claimed that this was necessary in order to defend the new knowledge from colonisation by the established power holders (Bernstein, 1971, p. 100 – 106). He also suggested that emerging knowledge without a strong identity might be more easily colonised by existing disciplines that might see it as a threat to their power.

The Stoneleigh Group embraced the content and process of the retreats at Camas and, like the Camas community, emphasised spiritual development as the purpose of the programme. Spirituality, I would argue, became the integrating idea for the retreat programme. This developed after the first pilot retreat in 2000. The literature introducing the retreats to the participants, written by one of the first mentors, Shaun, and sent to the participants of the second retreat, put the aims in this way:

WANTED young people to take part in a UNIQUE opportunity. You should be at a stage in your own personal journey of development to be interested and wondering about some of the big questions of:

Who am I?

Where am I going?
How will I get there?

[CD-SG(2101)]

Later, in the same publicity, a rationale for the retreat was offered. Spirituality was understood to mean having a defined set of values and a clear purpose, developing relationships within and beyond the self, experiencing a sense of the other and developing a desire to give service to that other.

We believe that it is essential to develop an awareness of self, others and the environment in which they live, in other words to develop the sense of their own “spirituality”.

[CD-SG(2101)]

The concept of spirituality as a central theme for the retreats was supported by Colin who was enthusiastic about the emerging link with the Iona Community's centre, Camas. The retreat programme was also heavily mediated by the practice at this retreat community. The philosophy at Camas is worth some analysis as it helps explain the way in which the participants came to articulate the relationship, as they understood it, between spirituality, youth transition and personal and social transformation. A paper written for the Iona Community by Mineter (2001) on the concept of formation was also tabled at the Stoneleigh Group's first forum. Mineter, an academic, a catholic and a trustee of Camas at the time of my research, discusses the potential within Christian, and especially Catholic, faith for helping people address the current environmental problems. He identifies the notion of formation, a central role of the church in the context of the individual and communities. This he understands as a set of beliefs, values, skills and knowledge that prepare people for the world in which they live. He highlights the importance of this idea being forward thinking rather than held in a doctrine that is perceived as no longer relevant. For him it is a political engagement with the world informed by evolving Christian values.

Mineter draws on outdoor education and his experience of Camas as an outdoor, residential retreat, to make his points about how this notion of formation might be practically advanced within church communities. He sees outdoor education as essentially experiential and values based in the forms that interest him. He also comments that he sees these forms growing in relation to those he considers to be recreational in their goals. These engagements with the world as it is in order to form young hearts and minds is, for him, a model for the development of radical Christian fellowship that can respond to the political issues of the day. This paper, heavily influenced by the Iona Community ethos and tabled at the early discussions about the approach of the Stoneleigh Project and its relations with Camas, fed directly into the ideas of the Stoneleigh Project. In particular, the idea of a values based approach rooted in personal experience and paying attention to the meaning the participants found within the experiences, rather than understanding it as a vehicle for the imparting of a packet of received wisdom, was thought to be crucial. It was felt that this would support young people in acting ethically in the world. As such Mineter, already an influence and commentator on the practices of Camas, became a strong influence on the underlying philosophy of the first Stoneleigh Project retreats.

As described above, the 'integrating idea' also received additional support from the new chair of the management group and the inclusion of BK and the Wrekin Trust amongst the partners. This was enhanced by the growing interest of some of the Stoneleigh Group partners and other youth organisations in the Group's network in the proposals for the establishment of a curriculum for spiritual development in youth work. Under a different hat Andy, the new chair, was co-ordinating a response to these developments from the outdoor education profession and saw the Stoneleigh Project as a major verification of the lobbying position that he was taking on behalf of the field. The Stoneleigh Project was featured prominently in his submissions to the consultation group over the last 2 years of the pilot and beyond.

The alignment of the people most involved in the provision of the Stoneleigh Project programme with a particular understanding of the integrating idea of spirituality compares well with Bernstein's suggestion that to effectively maintain an integrated curriculum requires a staff that offer a united ideological position (Bernstein, 1971). Without this, he

suggested, the programme would be open to re-colonisation by a collection code with strongly classified forms of knowledge. The co-operative inquiry also acted as a means to unite all the participants, adults and young people, behind a well-articulated expression of their claims for the meaning and value of spirituality as a central curriculum concept. This was further enhanced by the management group briefing the evaluator to include a rationale for spirituality within his study of the second round of piloting. The strength of this unified position was tested by efforts to recover a more conventional practice and interpretation of the Stoneleigh Project from both within and outside of the Stoneleigh Group.

The Struggle between the Programme Staff and the Stoneleigh Group Partners

Whilst the participants directly involved in the programme became increasingly committed to the central theme of spirituality, within the wider Stoneleigh Group the integrated concept of the retreats was harder to sustain. At times the integrating idea of spirituality and what it was perceived to represent was challenged. The link Colin and Phil had made between values and spirituality was off-putting to several individuals and organisations that had joined the Stoneleigh Group from a more secular background. The issue was complex. Some of the Stoneleigh Group partners raised concerns about there being any link to religion or a particular religion. They thought this would alienate young people from the Stoneleigh Project as most of them they believed would associate religion with institutions that imparted a particular value system rather than thinking of them as organisations that would work with them to build one.

My field notes indicate that this further concern for conflating spirituality and religion represented a view that became a major point of contest within the Stoneleigh Group and beyond. Colin and Phil, having sought to move the outdoor residential element of the programme away from what they perceived as the curriculum of outdoor leadership, in Bernstein's terms a collection curriculum (Bernstein, 1971), had moved it close to what others perceived as an equally worrying collection type pedagogic relationship with religion.

The partners in the Stoneleigh Group reconciled their concerns by deciding that, if they were to define the work of the Stoneleigh Project as spiritual development, they would address spirituality with openness, clarity and in a way that was detached from or non-aligned with religion. The programme management team significantly influenced this decision. The resistance to institutional forms of values development, whether religious or secular in origin, was not just a matter of concern to the young people as the evidence in chapter ten illustrates. It was also strongly upheld amongst the adult participants representing the member organisations.

Bernstein (1971) proposed that, in a collection style curriculum, teachers reproduce for the students the knowledge provided by the educational institutions of the state. They act as conduits and do not question the truth claims, the relevance of the knowledge to the students or the way knowledge is combined into subjects. I suggest that for some of the Stoneleigh Group partners the experience of their implicit assumptions about society being questioned by the very young people that they were established to help was challenging. They had perhaps not thought of themselves as acting as agents of the State maintaining the status quo in quite the way they were now being asked to consider. There are a number of indications of this in my notes from meetings and especially the forums.

For example, on one occasion I reported the emerging findings of the co-operative inquiry concerning the attitudes of young people to work to a forum meeting. An executive from one voluntary organisation in partnership with the Stoneleigh Group interrupted my presentation. Each time he substituted the words of the participants he did not like, such as spirituality, with words that he did, such as leadership. This editing was repeated in the minutes of the meeting and a draft of the notes on my report to be sent out with the minutes. The chair of the Stoneleigh Group spotted the changes and replaced them with the original version before they were distributed.

However, the best evidence came from a series of papers written by one of the youth workers and tabled at the management team meetings. These defended the Stoneleigh Group approach and its claims for the impact it was having on the young people to the

executive and directors of the voluntary organisation that employed him as a youth worker. This defence was made in the face of explicit questioning of the Stoneleigh Project's rationale and threats to withdraw from the Stoneleigh Group on the grounds that it was 'too radical for comfort'. For them the concern was that, to some degree, the Stoneleigh Project approach was causing their staff as well as their young people to question the aims of their organisation.

The values of the youth workers involved in the Stoneleigh Project were in keeping with the ideological approaches that Jeffs and Smith (2002) claim are rooted in the emancipatory traditions of youth work. In their paper, discussed in Chapter 5, Jeffs and Smith argue that these traditions of youth work are widely under threat from a more centralised and individualised approach. The reactions of the youth workers to any sign of an institution wanting to determine the curriculum of the Stoneleigh Project became a strong theme throughout the life of the Stoneleigh Group. Some of the youth workers claimed that their desire to protect the space of the Stoneleigh Project and the retreats from a strongly imparted curricula were directly and explicitly motivated by a reaction against outcomes based projects that they thought were increasingly dominating their youth work practice. One of the facilitators of the retreats for the Stoneleigh Group cited this concern in an e-mail that he shared with the management team. He resigned from the voluntary organisation he worked for stating that he could not face returning to outcome and funding driven youth work projects. The Stoneleigh Project can be understood as attractive to individual youth workers drawn to what Ord (2007) terms 'critical social education' and even 'radical social education' (p. 117-118) from a context of a youth service and even a voluntary youth organisations that they perceived as more rooted in what Ord terms a 'personal development' (p. 116-117) model of youth work.

The issue became contentious at times and spirituality was sometimes referred to as 'the 's' word' [FN-C05(3600-04)]. After the first year of programmes, the debate about substituting the word leadership for spirituality restarted and in some public documents Colin and Phil made this substitution. However, by now the management team were committed to the concept of spiritual development and decided to be even more explicit about what they meant by spirituality. They made a clear statement to the first forum of the

Stoneleigh Group partners that they understood spirituality to be separate from religion. They also stated that they felt each person should explore and develop their own sense of spirituality.

Spirituality, as such, is a "woody word" and those running projects needed to allow an experience to speak for itself without naming it. As each young person discovers their-self to be on a journey of individual challenge, so a clearer sense of themselves, of the joy of life, and of a global consciousness can emerge. The key thing is to help them to begin that journey.

D-J03(5903)

They pointed out that what they thought was essential for spiritual development in the context of the Stoneleigh Project was that each person had the opportunity to reflect on 'who they were, what they believed in and where they were going' [R-SG(4602)]. Phil's second attempt at defining these ideas on behalf of the Stoneleigh Group read

The emphasis is on non-religious spirituality and self-discovery, to allow participants to clarify their capabilities, values, ambitions and direction.

[CD-SG(5103)]

The concerns of the partner organisations can be understood in two ways. On the one hand were the Stoneleigh Group member organisations with a traditional position concerning religion. The British educational system has a long tradition of accepting faith-based schools. Under Bernstein's collection system of education the faith with which a school is associated would represent an imparted set of values and moral code strongly maintained by the school's pastoral system as well as being represented within its subject structure and daily, termly and annual rituals. Voluntary youth organisations are often similarly faith based though less overtly. I suggest that, for some of the Stoneleigh Group members, whilst it was implicitly acceptable to consider a new balance of power over the organising and construction of knowledge concerning certain social values held by secular authorities, it was less acceptable to question the authority of the establishments that represented moral

conduct. These members were wary of the idea of young people having a critical voice or choice concerning their ethics. They did not want the Stoneleigh Project to be concerned with processes that overtly questioned religious institutions and their role in values transfer in society.

For the other more liberal and radical members of the Stoneleigh Group, as well as the practising youth workers responsible for designing the programme, the issue was that, by associating values with spirituality, a connection was implied to the institutions of the church as the traditional authorities on these matters. In their understanding this would assert too much control, or, in Bernstein's terms, too strong a framing. They thought it would not allow the participants to critically appraise certain ethics or construct their own value positions. In their views religious organisations should be understood as only one of the institutions involved in working with values in society and one that should not be involved in the Stoneleigh Project.

Despite the risk of seeming to be allied with the institutional church the Stoneleigh Group decided that the concept of spirituality explored at a personal level was too useful an idea to be abandoned or hidden behind euphemisms such as 'leadership'. The growing interest in the role of youth work in the task of spiritual development at national level amongst civil servants in the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and from the National Youth Agency (NYA) was also a considerable influence on the Stoneleigh Group maintaining spirituality as a central concept. They were keen to demonstrate that spiritual development was possible in a way that engaged young people, was experiential and could demonstrate the value of the outdoors in supporting this provision. They were also keen to present a strong case for an approach that was non-aligned with religions. They felt that this stood the best chance of success as an approach that would reach a cross section of young people of no faith or multi-faith backgrounds.

What had begun life primarily as a pilot programme to explore ways of supporting marginalised young people to become agents of social change was transformed into a pilot

programme that was now also understood as a means to explore experiential ways of spiritual development for young people.

Leadership as a Colonising Influence: the struggle amongst the Stoneleigh Group partners

Those partner organisations that wished to work with young people to challenge the established structures of power and knowledge maintained the lead in the Stoneleigh Project. Those promoting this construction of the meaning of the Stoneleigh Project were seeking to transform the meaning of spirituality and leadership into forms that embraced the idea of the young people being their own agents of change. They wanted to encourage them to act from their own moral centres, establishing identities based on these choices and then creating as much as re-creating the social order as they made their transitions into the adult world.

I have discussed Bernstein's model of the pedagogic device in chapter eight and above (Bernstein, 1996, p. 39 – 52). It is a model of the process in which knowledge from the everyday world is disembedded from that context and embedded in a pedagogic context. Bernstein argued that this part of the process, which he termed the distributive rules of the pedagogic device (p. 43 - 46), creates a space in which the knowledge can be re-interpreted and, potentially, transformed. Bernstein termed this space a 'potential discursive gap' (p. 44). He thought of it as a space in which knowledge that he termed 'unthinkable knowledge' (p. 43), that is knowledge that he described as 'esoteric' (p. 43) and beyond the possible given the current accepted or 'mundane' (p. 43) knowledge, could become 'thinkable' (p. 43). Bernstein illustrates these concepts with reference to 'simple societies' in which he claims unthinkable knowledge is controlled by the high levels of religious castes. In a modern, 'complex society' he claimed it is controlled by the educational elite. In both cases, however, he claimed that what these two systems share is an elite who control the meaning that is attached to events in the everyday world (p. 43 - 44).

The youth workers designing the Stoneleigh Project retreat programme were working with the participants to construct knowledge about experiences that they understood as spiritual.

On the one hand the authentic setting of the retreat community gave a sense of a way of being that was everyday. However, the detached situation and intentional contrasting lifestyle meant that it can also be understood as acting as a 'discursive gap' between the everyday of the participants and the 'pedagogic devise' of the retreat. This process was participatory with the young people as well as the host community members, mentors and facilitators involved in the programme. The participants took control of the process of attaching meaning to what they understood as their spiritual experiences.

As a discursive gap has the potential to create new knowledge, to transform everyday knowledge and, especially, to give the power of meaning making to pedagogues and even young people, Bernstein argued that this space would be contested (p. 44 - 45). He claimed it would be contested by the institutions who might perceive this new understanding as a loss of power and control and so a threat to the established order and their own power. Those partner organisations in the Stoneleigh Group most closely associated with traditional forms of Christian belief or most closely related to the establishment such as the State or royalty were those that sought to contest the Stoneleigh Group's emerging ideas of spiritual development and especially its association with social change. This was extended to include similar organisations beyond the Stoneleigh Group approached during the advocacy phases of the Group's work. Those organisations most in support of the Stoneleigh Group's concepts were those associated with what they claimed to be radical forms of spiritual development that sought to empower people to transform themselves and their worlds.

The struggles amongst the Stoneleigh Group partners, for example over the use of the terms spirituality - the 's' word - and leadership to describe the programme, can be understood as the beginnings of an ideological struggle over the programme as Bernstein suggested would occur. The constant debates amongst the participants, between the management team members and within the Stoneleigh Group at the early forums discussed above, I would suggest, reflect the degree to which the idea was thought by many to be radical, perhaps too radical. The extent and persistence of the challenges to the idea can be explained as attempts to re-colonise the Stoneleigh Project with more conventional ideas.

I have described above how a debate developed concerning the use of the term spiritual development to define the central purpose of the Stoneleigh Project. The radical aim of social transformation did not go down well with all the members of the Stoneleigh Group whether couched in the language of spirituality or leadership. However, it was the association with spirituality that was most contentious. Despite the decision to continue with the concept of spiritual development as the central organising idea of the programme some members of the Stoneleigh Group remained critical of this choice.

Whilst I indicated that the term 'spirituality' was interpreted diversely by the members of the Stoneleigh Group as meaning personal as well as social transformation some still felt the concept of leadership was more acceptable as an umbrella term for values development work. It was a term ingrained in youth work and outdoor education as a 'good thing' for young people to acquire. From a youth work perspective this harks back to the rhetoric of Baden-Powell and Hahn. In Chapter 5 I described how both men, influenced by military experiences and ideas, promoted the concept of youth leadership as a way to revitalise a commitment to a set of established social values that were thought to be in decline. Some members of the Stoneleigh Group thought that the Stoneleigh Project could be constructed in a way that drew on these long held beliefs.

The first organisation to propose the adoption of leadership development as the 'integrating idea' was a founder member of the Stoneleigh Group. Its rationale, represented by an executive at a forum, was that it would maintain the potential benefit of the proposed programme and make it more widely accessible to new partners in the Stoneleigh Group or, in a later dissemination phase, to other potential youth organisations that might adopt the programme. In other words he felt that the conflation between values development and spiritual development was not helpful and that the programme would lose none of its impact by focussing on a set of clearly articulated values and leadership.

The strategy of integrating the programme within existing established practice received significant external support. The NYA, through its director, advised the Stoneleigh Group to develop the programme in much the same ways as the partner organisation above

suggested. His explanation for recommending this strategy was that a programme of values education under the guise of leadership development would disseminate more widely amongst both the voluntary and statutory youth work sectors. At the time the NYA were beginning the consultation on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills concerning spirituality in youth work. This consultation will be discussed further below. At this point it is interesting to note that the advice from the NYA suggested avoiding spirituality as a term to describe the purpose of the programme.

The turning point occurred when the person representing the dissenting organisation in the Stoneleigh Group suggested inviting one of his trustees, a general, to brief the Group on leadership. By associating leadership as an idea directly with a military institution in this way, however unfairly, he lost the debate for the time being. The management team were actively resistant. Even amongst those in support of adopting leadership as the central concept for the programme it conjured up a negative image of a particular form of hierarchical leadership holding established values. The forum at which the talk was to take place was poorly attended and the debate between leadership and spirituality was dropped at this point. As it happened the general cancelled on the day and the talk did not take place.

Leadership did not disappear from the discourse of the Stoneleigh Project. A number of people wrote documents describing the work of the Stoneleigh Group that replaced the term spiritual development with values or leadership development. Examples included the second grant application to the Rank Foundation, a presentation to the directors of several of the partner organisations and the report from a Stoneleigh Group forum. Colin explained the reason for recommending a shift of emphasis in his own organisation. He suggested that the appointment of a new chairperson of the grant awarding committee would react more favourably to leadership projects. He thought the business and Christian background of the new person would react unfavourably to projects related to secular ideas of spiritual development.

From the perspective of the approach to education advocated by the Stoneleigh Group, both the term leadership and spirituality were considered equally contentious by some. Both were associated with institutions understood to represent the established values of society. This was seen as problematic because of their association with what Bernstein would term collection type curricula that imparted an established body of knowledge leading to conventional pathways of identity formation. What the pedagogues and the partner organisations that perceived themselves as more radical and spiritual were defending was a space in which they could take a student centred approach to values development. They did this in order to offer one piece of practice that valued the knowledge, meaning construction and voices of the young people and could question the traditional values of society. For them the approach was more important than the concept used to define it. However, the concept, at first thought to be a useful integrating idea for an integrated curriculum had become the focus for a struggle seeking to control the curriculum and pedagogy of the retreats. Bernstein would argue that this was inevitable and that, despite the emerging conflict, the idea was a necessary defence against the re-colonising efforts of more conservative individuals and organisations.

The attempts to contest the programme and redefine it in more conventional ways were constantly resisted by those who were suspicious of more conventional pedagogic approaches and ideas. They were concerned that those influenced by the old institutions of church, army and state were simply attempting to colonise and control the new territory the Stoneleigh Group was attempting to create.

What was taking place within the microcosm of the Stoneleigh Group was a struggle between institutional representatives of the three established institutions of the church, the state and the military for a role in controlling the task of the values development of young people. Those pedagogues within the Stoneleigh Project who were committed to supporting young people in developing their values from their own experiences and finding or creating identities in the world where these values could be expressed had to work hard to sustain the programme's independence. This was made harder by the use of the terms spirituality and leadership, terms, as discussed in Chapter 4, already historically central in the struggle for the control of the moral development of young people.

However, despite the fears of the Stoneleigh Group, the institutions of the church and the state represented within the Stoneleigh Group partner organisations and network, the military were only a temporary player, did not necessarily want to restore the process of values development to an older, traditional model. It is also possible to interpret the events as an attempt to control a successful and high profile programme in order to maintain power within education by holding on to their influence on values development whatever form it took.

It is also worth noting that the youth organisations with the closest affinities with the church, the state and the military never became involved in the Stoneleigh Group. However, the National Youth Agency maintained an interest, mainly because of its recently acquired State funded project of developing a youth service curriculum for spiritual development.

The Struggle for Ideas after the Stoneleigh Project

The attempts to marginalise the elements of the Stoneleigh Project that were considered to be more radical failed. The individuals and organisations involved in the Stoneleigh Group that were considered to be radical and spiritual maintained the control of the pedagogy and curriculum of the retreat programme. Spirituality was maintained as the concept defining the approach and social as well as personal transformation was re-asserted as an aim. The research for this thesis ended when the pilot work on the Stoneleigh Project stopped. However, since then Andy supported by others, on behalf of the Wrekin Trust and BK, have used the reports from the Stoneleigh Project in two ways. Firstly it was used to encourage other educational institutions interested in spirituality as a part of their curricula to convince them that there is an effective experiential approach to spiritual development and that it can be used with young people.

Secondly it was used to inform a national consultation that culminated in the report on Spirituality and Spiritual Development in Youth Work produced by the NYA (Green, 2006). This report encourages the approach of using spiritual development as a vehicle for values education in secular as well as Christian youth work. The DfES commissioned this

consultation. The recommendations of this report represent a shift from the position held by the NYA during the life of the Stoneleigh Project that encouraged a separation of spiritual development from values education in youth work. Those using the results of the Stoneleigh Project to advocate for spiritual development believed that their work was one of several important influences that brought this shift about. Green (2006) thinks that the idea of spirituality has an important role to play in preserving an approach to the youth work curriculum that is free from the influence of outcome led approaches. She proposes that it does not seem to matter so much what it is about or what it achieves but that it maintains for youth workers a particular way of relating to young people that is valued by both parties.

A lot of creative thought has been brought to bear by youth work staff and thinkers about how the existing 'products' of youth work can be recognised and accredited. ... However, another effect of increased targeting is that youth work practice can change so that its success is measured principally in targets achieved. This can have a detrimental effect on the holistic, relationship based approach which is embedded in the values of the profession. By having something like 'spirituality' in the curriculum and practice there is a whole area which is much harder to pin down and constrain. The divergent nature of 'spiritual development' means that outcomes are much wider and individual. The outcomes are nearly all in the changes of value and meaning for the young person and these are much harder to quantify than a skill or piece of knowledge which can more easily be tested or monitored. Spirituality and spiritual development are by their nature 'free' subjects, and exploration of these areas potentially puts young people in touch with profound thinkers and social reformers. ... Spirituality as an area of the curriculum has the potential of exploring values at a deeper more profound level which results in the full education of the young person.

(p. 19)

Green's plea for a pedagogic space in which changes in meaning and value for young people are encouraged and where they can encounter the ideas and values of social reformers could well be an argument in favour of programmes such as the Stoneleigh Project. Indeed, the advocates for the work of the Stoneleigh Project claim to have been

influential in the development of these proposals. They saw this as one of the most important outcomes for the Stoneleigh Group.

Elsewhere in the report the author endorses the role of youth work as a means to facilitate equity for young people in society or to address the inequitable aspects of society on the development of young people. Green argues for the importance of spiritual development as a part of 'the youth work offer' (p. 16) to young people. This, she claims, would encourage a critical approach to the opportunities they receive from society in their transitions to adulthood.

In many of the significant times when youth work has been called upon to describe itself the value based nature of the profession has been reiterated. The values of equality, empowerment, education and participation emerge from a philosophy of the profession which is about the whole nature of the young person.

(p. 15)

It is in this context that the report defends 'free' curricula, and spirituality as a 'subject' that can only be offered in such a way. This implies that the content of the curriculum in this area is, in line with Bernstein's criteria for an integrated curriculum, up to the participants within it. For Green, the value of the spirituality term is that it maintains a space within youth work that allows for and encourages some agency on the part of individual young people in the development of their values and their choices of actions. This she understands as a useful way to help young people to have a voice of their own and for them to develop a degree of equity within society. This view is congruent with the view of the pedagogues of the Stoneleigh Project and the partner organisations who were perceived as more radical and spiritual.

Unravelling the Conflation of Values, Spirituality and Religion

Throughout the life of the Stoneleigh Project the interpretations of youth work practice that were understood to be more radical had to struggle to maintain a space in which their

radicalism could be sustained. Despite a number of challenges from within the Stoneleigh Group and beyond, spiritual development that supports young people in their efforts to become agents of social change remained the programme's purpose if not the actual outcome for very many young people.

The Stoneleigh Group maintained two spaces for pedagogic discourse. One involved the participants in the retreats and the other the representatives of the partner organisations and other interested bodies. From the perspective of the programme 'spirituality' may have been a problematic and even an unhelpful concept confusing and alienating some adults and young people as much as drawing and inspiring others. On the other hand the word was used successfully to defend a particularly valued approach to values development in youth work from those interested in restoring established social values and collection curricula approaches with which to teach them. High regard was accorded to spirituality as a personal matter on which it was thought that public definitions of appropriate curricula should not trespass.

From the perspective of the advocacy work spirituality was effective in creating a space for a discourse about its meaning and value in youth work. Leadership as a term was used in an attempt to secularise the debate. Whilst addressing the problems of alienation and confusion caused by the term 'spirituality', concern was raised and upheld that it was a concept also widely associated with the promotion of an established set of values. Those organisations with an interest in maintaining the established distribution of power would not be so timid about proposing a curriculum or pedagogy for work under leadership as an 'integrating idea'. The result would have been the loss of the potential radical pedagogic space that the Stoneleigh Group had created. As such those members of the Stoneleigh Group committed to supporting young people in becoming agents of social change resisted, mostly successfully, this colonisation of their work.

There were a number of factors in favour of spirituality as an 'integrating idea'. First, the Stoneleigh Group were able to use it to justify an integrated curriculum taking a person centred approach to values development. Later, this argument contributed to the National

Youth Agency making the same defence in its consultation report (Green, 2006). The term acted as an effective defence from collection type models of values development open to influence from those with an interest in maintaining social order and not transforming it. In addition the person centred approach fitted well with youth work values perceived as under threat from the State. These values underpinned an approach that believed in the agency of young people and their rights to develop this through participation in society, subversively and radically if desired. This was congruent with the views of some members of the Stoneleigh Group that society needs a radical transformation and that young people can help with this task. This they thought was achieved through the construction of identities founded on values derived personally from experience. Spirituality was thought of as a term that made it possible to get close to these values without getting close to religion.

A number of factors are against the use of spirituality as an overarching concept. The conflation of values development with spirituality alienated and confused as many people as it motivated. The lens of spirituality through which the programme was regarded prevented a deeper understanding of values development and of integrated curriculum models in informal education outdoors. A number of organisations were hesitant to engage with values development because of the association through spirituality with religion. The feeling was that it was not the appropriate domain of secular organisations. It also felt that it provided a foothold with which the pedagogues within religion could seek to regain control of the emerging new curriculum of values development.

Whilst the radical elements in the Stoneleigh Group sought to resist the Stoneleigh Project being used to support conventional pathways to adulthood they can be challenged on the grounds of the findings related to their own approach. It can be argued that both sides in the ideological struggle did not respect the actual aspirations of the young people involved. Fortunately, the integrated curriculum approach bolstered by the ethos of youth work practices meant that the young people felt the Stoneleigh Project did empower them on trajectories of their choosing. However, the claims made for the Stoneleigh Group did not respect the findings that many of these trajectories re-affirmed established pathways to adulthood and, whilst many young people experienced personal transformations, it only occasionally led to actions of social transformation.

Those who made use of the findings of the Stoneleigh Project after the piloting was concluded held the view that spirituality was a force for good in the transformation of our society and that it should be a part of the development of young people. They were successful in contributing to this view being adopted by the NYA and the DfES. However, it is possible the separation of values development from the concept of spirituality and the institutions of religion might also aid the transformation of society. Such a step, together with a growing understanding of how outdoor approaches to informal education founded on an integrated model can support this work, could be a better approach to supporting the project of values development. It may also enhance the equity experienced by young people as they are in transition to adulthood. This seems a better strategy if this transition is to include the role of creating as well as re-creating the society in which they are to live. If this is the case, what is needed is advocacy for State involvement in values development that recognises this as a time in which radical social transformations need to occur. An important part of this work would be the recognition that young people will experience the transition to adulthood as an increasingly problematic process that needs appropriate support but also holds significant potential for a new society.

Chapter 14:

Conclusions

Introduction

This is a study of a pilot programme to support the values development of marginalised young people that uses a particular medium of outdoor retreats and has the particular aim of encouraging them to become agents of social change. The organisers of the programme, the Stoneleigh Group, made claims that the approach and the outcomes of the programme were radical. In this thesis I suggest that, whilst the practices of the Stoneleigh Project can, in certain respects, be understood as radical in approach, especially the retreats, the outcomes for the young people were more varied. Whilst the claims for radical outcomes were achieved in the sense that was meant by a number of the Stoneleigh Group partner organisations, that is following a radical pedagogy and achieving personally transformative outcomes that supported a considerable degree of social mobility, it was only partially achieved in the way that was intended by the Stoneleigh Group, the creation of agents of social change. Nevertheless, the advocacy work of some of the partners did achieve a more radical statement of the role of youth work in supporting young people as agents of change in society.

Chapter 1 raises four questions that are central to the concerns that are addressed by this thesis. The answers to these questions are summarised in turn below. Finally, some suggestions for further research are offered.

Questions One and Two: The Integrated Curriculum and Pedagogy of the Retreats

The first two questions posed by this research were:

- What knowledge and values were considered significant by the participants in the Stoneleigh Project?

- In what way was that knowledge gained and given voice?

With these questions I set out to explore the pedagogy and curriculum of the Stoneleigh Project and, especially, the retreat programme. My interest lay in the process and content of the retreat programme as it contributed to developing knowledge of the self and the self's relationship with the social world. In Chapter 10 I apply Taniguchi, Freeman and LeGrand-Richards' (2005) model of fractional sublimation to this process. Using this model, they claim that outdoor courses can offer experiences that cause the sublimation of identity. This, they suggest, is followed by a process of reconstruction. In the case of the Stoneleigh Project it is my view that the marginalised young people attracted to the programme were already in a state of crisis and so were already experiencing the process of sublimation of old identities and were therefore open to the construction of new ones.

I also apply Bernstein's (1996) concept of a pedagogic device to the understanding of the retreat programme. In his view this can create a site of new possibility by disembedding a body of knowledge from the everyday world and placing it in a pedagogic site. In the light of this idea I understand the retreats as disembedding young people from their everyday world and so creating new possibilities for self-knowledge. I suggest that the retreat facilitators and the host community valued self-knowledge as a means with which to explore identity.

In Chapter 10 I use Bernstein's theories to explore the pedagogy and curriculum that the retreat programmes developed to support the young people in reflecting on and reconstructing their identities. I argue that the Stoneleigh Project retreats are best understood as an integrated curriculum well towards one end of Bernstein's continuum of collection and integrated types of approach with both weak framing and weak classification. I identify a number of characteristics as significant in supporting this approach.

Self-knowledge and the construction of identity

The first of these characteristics of the retreat approach is what I claim to be the authentic experience of living in a remote community by an explicit and alternative set of values that challenged the established values of the everyday world from which the young people came. I argue that the retreat programmes were claimed by the participants to be effective because they offered the young people space in which to reflect on their identities and radical alternatives with which they could experiment. The experience, that I claim Bernstein would describe as a weak classification of knowledge, allowed the young people to express, examine and reconstruct their knowledge of themselves. Experiences of being defined by others were few and, when they occurred, the young people rejected them.

The second characteristic of the retreat programme that I claim was significant was the special nature of the social interaction within the community. I suggest that Bernstein would have described this as weak framing and that it led to pedagogic approaches that shared power and co-constructed knowledge. In particular, I claim the ideal held by the community of equitable power relations between the members of the community and the visitors, especially in the context of an unusual intergenerational mix, was influential in supporting the young people as the agents of the reconstruction of their identities. This equitable distribution of power was expressed in a number of ways considered to be significant by the participants. These included positive regard for others, the co-constructed nature of the programme, the approach to resolving conflicts and the attention to giving to the community rather than taking from it.

The approach taken by the community at Camas and adopted by the Stoneleigh Project can, in my view, be likened to Ord's (2007) youth work model of 'radical social change' and so lived up to the Stoneleigh Group's aspirations to support young people in becoming agents of social change.

I argue that, in an experiential programme of youth transition, the link between power and knowledge is of special significance. An important aspect of self-knowledge that I discuss in Chapter 10 is the participants' experience of the self in different power relations with

others to those experienced in the everyday world. In particular the participants claimed it was important to experience the self in relationships that either gave more power to the young person or were equitable. Additionally, the participants commented that they thought it was especially important to develop knowledge about the particular ways in which each individual can express their power in relation to others in their personal and social worlds and in relation to choices in the public worlds of leisure, work and education. In these ways I suggest that knowledge of power was a major contributor to experiences of personal transformation and feelings of agency.

The skills of narrative and new possibilities for identity

The last characteristic of the retreat programme that I explore as a theme in this research is the importance placed on developing the skills of narrative, in both embodied and verbal ways, and of telling and listening to narratives of the visitors' life stories. I expand on this theme in Chapter 11. Developing the skills of narrative, I claim, is the critical aspect of the retreat programme that enabled young people to develop new knowledge of themselves in the context of their pasts, the sense they had of themselves on the retreats and the possible selves they might become afterwards. The participants often commented on the value of 'voice' in exploring their new sense of powerfulness in relation to those on the retreat and those in the narratives. I suggest that, in developing these skills, the young people gained or enhanced their abilities to transform themselves. It is, I argue, through the process of narrative, both embodied in their actions and verbalised in their stories, that the young people became agents in the construction of their identities.

In Chapter 11, I point out that, according to Labov (1972), the critical idea that defines a narrative as distinct from a story is the idea that a narrative evaluates 'complicating factors' in the story. I argue that this process of evaluation is central to the skills of narrative that the young people developed. I suggest that, in many cases, the young people developed narratives that described themselves as in positions of more power in relation to their old social networks. This led to narratives in which the young people developed new possibilities of themselves to live by, and considered new social networks and leisure, education and career paths. This, I suggest, gave them a sense of agency and feelings of empowerment. Narrative had the potential to act as a bridge between the authentic but

contrasting and extraordinary world of the retreats and the possibility of sustaining a new identity in the everyday world. The difference and diversity of social relations to be found on the retreats provided a context in which the young people could learn and practice the skills of expressing their emerging identities in different social networks that operated by different norms. This, I argue, was a critical competence necessary for effective personal and social transformation.

In Chapter 2 I describe how the Stoneleigh Group aspired to developing a programme that was, in their view, radical in approach and in outcome. The retreat element of the programme was, I suggest above, radical. It questioned the norms of society and helped the young people to question the norms that defined, and in some cases, marginalised them. It was successful at supporting the young people in confronting the marginalised identities with which they were struggling and gave them skills and experiences with which to construct new identities. The identities that the retreats made possible transformed their understanding of themselves and the possibilities that they imagined for themselves.

However, from the point of view of the Stoneleigh Group's aspirations for supporting young people in becoming agents of social change, these aspirational new identities, whilst supporting the social mobility of the individuals, often reproduced rather than transformed established social norms. At this point the programme, I suggest, was effective at supporting young people in becoming the agents of their own personal transformation but the outcomes were more varied in relation to the Stoneleigh Group's aspirations for social transformation.

Bernstein linked the role of constructing knowledge in a curriculum to the expression of power in maintaining or transforming the social order (Bernstein, 1996, p. 28 – 33). He claimed that a curriculum operating under an integrated code in which knowledge is constructed collaboratively amongst the teachers and students has the potential to reorganise knowledge, re-construct identities and so transform the personal and social conditions of the young person in a way that challenges the social order. Within the microcosm of the retreat community I argue that the young participants did have an

experience of enhancement, inclusion and participation as citizens with an equitable share of power and resources. When this was not their experience they were able to identify and challenge it successfully. Rather as Fingal's Cave acted as a symbol for the recovering drug user (see Chapter 11), the retreats acted as a symbol for a transformed sense of self in a meaningful narrative that was unfolding and which they felt increasingly that they were authoring. Therefore, in relation to Bernstein's three principles for an effective education for democracy, I suggest that the young people were encouraged by the retreat programme to become active citizens with a belief in their power to reproduce or transform the social world through their choices of adult identities. However, whether the outcomes of the retreats made a real difference in the lives of the young people, or whether they offered a liberal fiction that 'papered over the cracks' of the failings of the current distribution of power and resources in society by giving an impression of agency and power, depended on what the young people did afterwards.

The characteristics of an integrating idea

According to Bernstein (1971), a characteristic of an integrated curriculum is that it maintains a weak boundary between the educational and the everyday worlds. By this he meant that the curriculum would be perceived as relevant and valuable in both worlds and that knowledge could readily cross from one world into the other. However, this was one aspect of the retreats that did not have the characteristic of an integrated curriculum. I suggest in Chapter 13 that there was a strong boundary between the retreats and the everyday world. This boundary was created physically by the distance and isolation of the venues that were used to host them. The people who constituted the host community strengthened this separation. They were not a part of the young people's lives beyond the retreat and often came from culturally and socially different backgrounds. This was, in part, countered by the presence with each young person on retreat of a mentor from the same voluntary organisation. I discuss in Chapters 10 and 11 the potential impact that this contrast had for the transfer of learning, a widely held concern, as I discuss in Chapter 3, for the efficacy of outdoor education. Whilst the degree of difference and separation contributed to the possibilities for new identities, it has been argued that it could prevent the application of meaningful changes on return. As I discuss above, Bernstein also recognises the problem in the context of liberal educational initiatives that claim to offer a democratic outcome. His concern was that, in fact, they give the impression within the

programme of an effective distribution of power whilst failing to help their students have an effect on its distribution within society.

The strength of the boundary between the retreat programme and the everyday world was, I claim, further enhanced by the concept of spiritual development, at least for some participants. I discuss the problematic nature of spirituality as a central concept in the curriculum of the Stoneleigh Project in Chapter 13. I indicate that, for some, it suggested a collection style curriculum of imparted values because of its association with religion and the perception of the established power of the church that this implied. For others I describe how it was considered to be an aspect of personal life not appropriate within an educational programme. In Chapter 10 I report how the young people reacted to it in various ways. Some with religious backgrounds found it familiar whilst others initially thought it was alienating and concurred with the concerns about religious connections.

I will return to the issue of a strong boundary between the retreat programmes and the everyday worlds below. At this point I want to refer to the discussion in Chapter 13 of the way in which spirituality worked as an integrating idea. Bernstein argued that such an idea would be necessary in an integrated curriculum in order to defend it from efforts at re-colonisation from the established institutions of education. This, he claimed, was because, once knowledge is disembedded from the everyday world and located in a weakly framed pedagogic site, it gains the potential for developing new possibilities that might construct different distributions of power and resources. I claim in Chapter 13 that I think that this was the role that spirituality assumed within the Stoneleigh Project and, especially, the retreats. I suggest that it might be useful to understand the remoteness of the retreat venues and the novelty of the community and its values as other characteristics that helped to support the integrating idea. The 'distance' they created from normalising influences protected the retreats from established views about personal development for young people out of doors. In particular, I suggest that the authority of the institution of the Iona Community as a respected if radical organisation helped to protect the Stoneleigh Project retreats from early attempts at 're-colonisation'. I will return to a discussion of the findings concerning the struggle for control of the Stoneleigh Project curriculum below.

Question Three: Agency and the Reproduction and Transformation of Social Order

The third question raised by this research was:

- Who exactly did this empower, on whose behalf and to what end?

This question relates directly to the Stoneleigh Group's aims. The Stoneleigh Group claimed to have developed a programme of what they termed spiritual development that supported young people in becoming agents of social change. This research suggests that this claim was not fully justified. Although some young people did achieve this outcome this research indicates that the credit for this belongs to the partner organisations concerned and not the Stoneleigh Group. However, this research also indicates that the Stoneleigh Project helped young people to gain some agency in their lives, which led to most of the young people transforming their personal circumstances and their social networks and to them continuing to develop identities congruent with their emerging values and aspirations. The research indicates that this was achieved by what I have termed lateral mobility that was supported by forms of social capital best described as 'bridging'.

Chapter 12 analyses the ways in which the young people perceived that their lives had developed after the retreats and during the mentored voluntary youth work roles provided by the partner organisations. For many young people this meant addressing personal issues or changing the quality of their relationships with family and friendship networks. In some cases the opportunity to return to the Stoneleigh Project in a different role was useful in supporting a new identity or sustaining a trajectory. Even for the few that continued to reproduce the conditions that marginalised them, their mentors claimed that they were in a better situation after the Stoneleigh Project. They were understood to have explored alternative pathways and to have found networks that could support these routes forward if they wished to return to them at some later point.

The analysis of the trajectories of the young people in Chapter 12 (see Diagram 1, p. 290) indicates that, once issues concerning their personal lives were resolved, further development occurred in their social and public lives. New social networks were formed

and new leisure, education and work opportunities were pursued. In these cases, I argue that the majority of the young people made choices that, whilst transforming their personal situations, tended to reproduce social norms by choosing established pathways to adulthood. I have described this pathway as 'lateral mobility'. However, this approach to transition was understood by the Stoneleigh Group partner organisations in different ways.

I argue that the experience of young people on retreat was of being disembedded from their everyday situations in a way that supported the reconstruction of new identities already provoked by the fractional sublimation caused by their variously marginalised situations. For some of the young people on the Stoneleigh Project the conditions by which they were marginalised were beyond their control. I suggest that they could only imagine escape. For others, I argue that the condition of marginalisation was more of a personal reaction to the way in which adulthood was being offered to them. That these young people understood themselves as marginalised was, in some ways, a resistance to the social norms that were steering them towards certain pathways that they rejected. This, some of the partners claimed, represented a challenge to the social order as young people followed, 'step-by-step', pathways into adulthood that their social and educational backgrounds would not have otherwise indicated. They broke with the social norms by not remaining marginalised and by not following the conventional pathways. For some Stoneleigh Group partners this was their aspiration for the young people and captured their hopes for what they meant by the Stoneleigh Group's aim. However, in Chapter 9, I suggest that the Stoneleigh Group had a more radical interpretation of social change than this.

Critical to these transformations, then, were the possibilities of moving on. In many cases the young people realised their transformed senses of themselves by a combination of leaving home, choosing paths that challenged parental and class based expectations of them and moving out of geographical areas and social groups. Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) suggest that exploring a relationship with place is an important aspect of youth development. They argue that these explorations were in relation to 'belonging' to a place thought of as 'home'. In this case 'home' was a place to be left. I suggest that only by leaving 'home' could their marginalised states be transformed. Perhaps the downside of transformation was letting go of a sense of belonging in order to become 'rootless'.

I suggest that one partner organisation in the Stoneleigh Group did achieve the outcomes that the Stoneleigh Group intended. In Chapter 12 I suggest that, in the case of the young people from this organisation, the result of their actions was a transformation of the social norms of their community. In this case the way young people transformed the way young people were understood by that community, the role the community took in relation to young people and the meaning and nature of the educational and work opportunities that the community encouraged young people to develop for themselves. I argue that all of these changes challenged the norms of that community.

The most significant influence on the pathways to adulthood that the young people took was the opportunity provided by the partner organisations to which they belonged. In Chapter 12 I suggest that, whilst the retreats offered an integrating style of curriculum and pedagogy providing considerable opportunity for the young people to construct their own knowledge and values of themselves and the world they perceive themselves to inhabit, the follow up programme provided by the individual voluntary organisations had more in keeping with a collection style of curriculum and pedagogy. These follow up opportunities, I argue, were underpinned by the values of the partner organisation and not of the Stoneleigh Group. I have shown in Chapter 9 how these were, in most cases, quite different from the values of the Stoneleigh Group. Those organisations with a conservative understanding of youth development understood the role of youth work as helping young people to realise their potential within the conventional world of adult work, a view in keeping with Ord's (2007) 'personal development' model of youth work. They acted as change agents only in that young people who were understood as the victims of the inequities of the system were restored to conventional paths and so gained access to power and resources that might reasonably be expected within this system. These young people had agency in the sense that they played their part in reproducing the order within their social and public worlds.

More liberal partner organisations were effective at encouraging young people to help these organisations in their task of reaching other marginalised young people in their communities. In a number of cases young people became youth workers with their own organisations. These young participants in the Stoneleigh Project can be understood as

having decided to address the problems of inequity but not its causes. In these cases the youth work organisations can, I claim, be characterised as practicing a ‘critical social education’ model of youth work (Ord, 2007).

One radical organisation within the Stoneleigh Group set out to work with young people to transform the attitudes of their community to young people and the type and meaning of the work they could aspire to. In this one case, the young people effectively transformed the social context in which they lived, changing the values of the community to which they belonged in the process. However, it is this organisation that can claim the credit for this outcome and not the Stoneleigh Group. This organisation can, in my view, claim to be practicing what Ord (2007) terms a ‘radical social change’ model of youth work.

It is worth noting that the Stoneleigh Project was effective at supporting young people who already were in fluid social networks, and in some cases young people with weak or chaotic social networks, in achieving personal transformation or, in some cases where the pedagogy of the voluntary organisation was aligned with that of the retreat, acting as agents of social change (see Diagram 1, Chapter 12, p. 290). In this context the ‘young people’s social capital was not just a product of the social capital of their parents – the means of hoisting them up the ladder of achievement ... but as a vital means of renewal and development for society as a whole’ (Helve and Bynner, 2007, p. 9).

Young people in strong social networks were supported by the programme but cannot be described as experiencing personal transformation or becoming socially mobile. These young people understood the outcome of the programme as a good one but it was not the outcome the Stoneleigh Group set out to achieve. The programme did not support some young people with weak or chaotic social networks. Their ‘downward mobility’ (Diagram 1, Chapter 12, p. 290) maybe a realistic but little regarded counter flow to the upward or lateral mobility of others. Nevertheless, this pathway to transition might also benefit from effective youth work support at the very least. It may even be possible to counter the trend.

The Stoneleigh Group and the role of youth work

The Stoneleigh Group accepted the idea that modern society is more plural, fast changing and riskier and that individuals are expected to take on more of the responsibility for constructing an identity within this context. They developed a programme to support individuals in developing the agency to take on this responsibility. Nevertheless they did this within the framework of what Smith (2000) calls an associative life or what Bernstein (1996) termed *communitas*. I suggest that the influence of the traditions of 'good' youth work were evident in the practice of the Stoneleigh Group. They are embedded in the cultures of the partner organisations and appeared in the approach of the retreat communities and the mentoring and values of each of the voluntary youth organisations.

However, the approach of the Stoneleigh Group has similarities and differences with the origins of youth work that I discuss in Chapter 4. The practice of the Stoneleigh Group was not simply a reproduction of old ways. I argue in Chapter 5 that, in the past, social reformers used various approaches to associative life to support individuals in transforming themselves and their social situations. That time, I suggest, was also a time of rapid social change with the working classes gaining more access to the knowledge and wealth of society. The project then was partly to ensure a more equitable distribution of this new power and, at the same time, to ensure that the values that underpinned society were the core values of the current power holders. The discontinuity that was being addressed was between the working classes and mainstream society.

The structural problems of class still affected some of the young people who participated in the Stoneleigh Project. However, I argue that most of the young people involved were marginalised by the consequences of social mobility and not the barriers to it. Disrupted families and the perceived benefits of education displaced some young people from the value systems and identities associated with their roots. I suggest that UK society has yet to offer institutional pathways to alternative identities that hold any meaning for these young people. For the participants in the Stoneleigh Project the discontinuity lay between one generation and the next as much as between the classes or any other social divide. I suggest that the rate of change in values and lifestyles has begun to disrupt old patterns of transition that do not allow for those already attempting to adapt to a world they perceive

as substantively different from the world their elders define. Instead of seeking to impart a set of values from one generation to the next and so re-create the current order of society, I suggest that the Stoneleigh Group intended to support the development of a new set of values to cope with whatever it is the world is becoming. In helping to transform individuals whose value systems were already disrupted they also hoped to help transform the social order.

Social transformation and the Stoneleigh Project

As I discuss above most young people who took part in the Stoneleigh Project transformed their personal circumstances through their own agency by adopting conventional pathways to adulthood and so acted in a way that reproduced the social order. However, the evidence I discuss in Chapter 12 shows that one small scale, recently formed and locally based partner organisation, ECO, demonstrated that it was possible to support young people in the process of acting as agents of social transformation. Bigger organisations were more likely to act on behalf of the established order in society. I suggest that these more conventional organisations were influenced by their long standing traditional roots in Christian based youth work and by the purposes of those who provide the funding, mainly the State. It is interesting to note that the organisation that was successful at achieving social change through the medium of the young people only accepted funding when the young people in the organisation were first consulted about what is needed and why.

The evidence from this study does not make it possible to explore whether young people are influenced primarily by the values of the youth organisation guiding them or whether they are attracted to youth organisations that will support their aspirations. There is some evidence that young people did change their allegiances when this was possible to be with youth organisations that were more congruent with their values.

I concur with Bernstein's remarks referred to in Chapter 8 that the world is changing to one that will need people with a greater degree of flexibility. I would go further and suggest that it is a world facing significant changes on several fronts. The ability to respond with new values and from these to create new lifestyles, not just new work patterns, is

increasingly apparent. Education will need to respond to these trends. The breadth of this task means that it will of necessity embrace personal and social as well as public worlds. The Stoneleigh Project curriculum offers a way in which educational initiatives can support people who are struggling with these dilemmas. Indeed the approach of the retreat programme in particular, I argue, appears to address exactly these needs.

Question Four: The Struggle to Break Out of a Liberal 'Papering Over of the Cracks'

The degree to which the Stoneliagh Project was or was not radical in an ideological sense has been discussed above. Question four is:

- How did the struggle for the control of the Stoneleigh Project illuminate the politics of radical curriculum development that was aimed at social transformation?

It was developed to help this research focus on the politics of the struggle for a radical or conventional interpretation of the process and outcomes of the programme. This struggle unfolded in relation to the claims being made for the programme rather than in relation to the actual processes and outcomes as understood by the participants.

In Chapter 13 I argue that the radical partners in the Stoneleigh Group advocating for social transformation gained control of the interpretation of the Stoneleigh Project. I suggest that a mismatch sometimes occurred between the actions that young people took and the claims that were made for their actions as a result of the enthusiasm that these advocacy groups had for the radical concept of the Stoneleigh Project. I argue that these organisations represented the Stoneleigh Project in a way that supported their interests and not in a way that always respected the evidence of the participants. This enthusiasm was, I suggest, driven by the founders of the Stoneleigh Group who were keen for the Stoneleigh Project to, as Bernstein (1996) would describe it, break free of the liberal fiction of education as an agent of social transformation. For them, I suggest, this involved not only resisting the re-colonisation of the Stoneleigh Project by conventional educational approaches and discourses, but also asserting that the young people did indeed become agents of social change in their communities.

Re-colonisation

In Chapter 13 I claim that the Stoneleigh Group created a second 'space for pedagogic discourse' through its advocacy role within the field of youth work. This was created by the members of the Group interested in the role of spiritual development for young people in helping with the project of social transformation. Control for the knowledge of the Stoneleigh Project and its interpretation was contested as Bernstein's (1996) ideas would have predicted. A space for pedagogic discourse opened up by pedagogues will be, he claimed, the subject of attempted colonisation by those with an interest in maintaining the social order. This certainly occurred in several forms although this research suggests that the attempts at colonisation by these interests largely failed. I suggest that these attempts failed because of the strength of what Bernstein (1971) would have termed the integrating idea of spirituality reinforced, I suggest above, by the authority of the Iona Community and the remoteness and contrasting approach of the venue.

This resistance had the effect of maintaining what some members of the Stoneleigh Group thought of as a radical pedagogy and others as traditional youth work values. Young (1999) defines the ideals of youth work as

To engage young people in *moral philosophising* through which they make sense of themselves, their experiences and their world.

This is based on voluntary *relationships* with young people that involve accepting and valuing young people, honesty, trust, respect and reciprocity. Through such relationships youth workers support, enable and inspire young people to:

- Engage in philosophical inquiry through 'conversation'.
- Learn from their experience.
- Cultivate virtuous expression through practise.

This *process* of reflection and self-examination supports young people to increasingly integrate their values, actions and identity, and take charge of themselves as empowered and authentic human beings.

In my view the ideal of the Stoneleigh Group and of some of its members was close to this definition and, in some aspects of the programme, notably the retreats and some of the mentor/mentee relationships, and in many of the outcomes for young people this describes well the process, content and outcome of the Stoneleigh Project.

Advocacy

The advocates for the approach of the Stoneleigh Project were, I suggest, sometimes over-enthusiastic in their claims for its effectiveness at supporting young people in becoming agents of social change. Nevertheless this argument probably had some influence on the radical proposals made for the development of a curriculum for spirituality in youth work at a national level. As summarised above, one of the partner organisations can claim that they broke free of the liberal fiction in the actions that the young people took. Whilst I argue that the Stoneleigh Group cannot make this claim, they can say that they were able to support the discourse concerning spirituality in youth work in breaking free of conventional rhetoric. They encouraged more radical expressions of the purpose of youth work in supporting the transformational potential of young people in society.

This research suggests that, whilst this way of describing spirituality in youth work has some advantages, it also has the disadvantage of concealing a more rational account of the curriculum and pedagogic practice of what I would argue is more accurately described as values development. The term spirituality confused many of the participants in the Stoneleigh Project and that continuing to use this term to describe work of this nature is likely to alienate and confuse many other young people and youth workers. It will also inhibit important curriculum development. The approach to curriculum development piloted by the Stoneleigh Group would, I suggest, be more accessible if it is described as values development. Pedagogues could become more skilful in this work if obfuscating terms do not conceal the pedagogy from analysis and development. This is occurring at a time when I suggest a radical approach to values development is needed as society moves forward at an ever-faster pace into a period of social transformation. In my view this research highlights the importance of secularising the task of values development at the

same time as attempting to find frameworks that will protect the more radical potential of such programmes from re-colonisation by established approaches to informal education out of doors.

Questions for Further Study

The analysis in this thesis applies to one case study. Further studies could usefully explore the same questions with different age groups in different social situations. This would provide a wider base from which to consider curricula of empowerment and their potential for supporting personal and social transformation. The effectiveness of youth work interventions in relation to young people with different social network contexts is also worth further study as would be studies exploring youth work support for young people whose pathways are described in this thesis as 'lateral' or 'downward'. Studies that explored pedagogic approaches using other contexts than voluntary work and outdoor retreats would also be worthwhile. Comparisons involving emerging practices in the UK with practices of informal outdoor education and youth development in other countries could also be fruitful.

The interest taken by this researcher in addressing the gaps and blind spots in outdoor education research by examining pedagogic processes from the perspective of the participants has been fruitful. Further work using a critical ethnographic or narrative approach, and Bernstein's educational theories would, this writer believes, reveal much more to scrutiny for the benefit of professional practice.

Given the significance this conclusion has placed on the need for effective educational programmes of values development, further research that explores the struggle for control between innovative pedagogues and other political forces in society with an interest in the control and direction of educational initiatives would be especially welcome. Like Bentley (1998) I believe that educational programmes that take learners 'beyond the classroom', understand young people as active partners in their learning, is 'broader (offering) ... a wider range of experiences, roles and situations' (p. 1) and 'deeper because it must nurture a greater understanding in young people' (p. 1), will be much needed. As our society

responds to a rapidly changing world I believe there will constantly be sites of struggle for the control of the values of that society and that education in all its forms will be just such a site. Understanding this struggle will help in the development of effective, radical educational interventions at critical times of social transformation.

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Appendix 1:
The Backgrounds to Participants in the Text

Code	Association with Stoneleigh Group partners	Role in Stoneleigh Project
Adam (M)	Young person from Weston Spirit.	Young person and then host community member.
Alex (M)	Mentor and facilitator with Weston Spirit. Management team member.	Attended most retreats as mentor and then facilitator.
Andy (M)	Invited chairperson of the Stoneleigh Group and the management team.	N/A.
Ben (M)	Volunteer and then member of staff from Endeavour Training.	Young person then mentor at Camas.
Brad (M)	Young person from Mobex, Cumbria.	Attended the Gillerthwaite retreat and follow up and the concluding conference.
Beth (F)	Young person from Endeavour.	Attended first Camas retreat.
Clare (F)	Member of Brahma Kumaris community. Representing Brahma Kumaris at Stoneleigh Group meetings.	N/A.
Clive (M)	Student at St. Martin's College. Conducted research into spirituality at the end of the first phase of evaluation.	Young person and then host community member at Cae Mabon.
Colin (M)	A director of the Rank Foundation.	N/A.

Code <i>cont.</i>	Association with Stoneleigh Group partners <i>cont.</i>	Role in Stoneleigh Project <i>cont.</i>
Emma (F)	Mull resident and artist.	Volunteered to provide art sessions at Camas.
Gordon (M)	Young person.	Participant and then Camas host community member.
Hannah	Young person with Mobex and later Eden Community Outdoors.	Attended the Gillerthwaite retreat.
Heather (F)	Co-ordinator of Camas.	Led the community at Camas during the four retreats held there.
Ian (M)	Staff member of Mobex.	Mentor at Gillerthwaite.
Jack (M)	Adult involved in Brahma Kumaris.	Host community member at Cae Mabon.
James (M)	Evaluator. Management team member.	N/A.
Jill (F)	Director of the Wrekin Trust. Administrator for Stoneleigh Group 2002–2004.	N/A.
Joanne (F)	Camas Resident.	Host community member.
Justin (M)	Young person from Endeavour Training.	Attended the first Camas retreat.
Liz (F)	Founder and co-ordinator of Eden Community Outdoors.	Mentor and host community member, Gillerthwaite.
Lucy (F)	Associate of Threshold. Facilitator and management team member.	The main retreat facilitator. Also developed the training programme.
Mac (M)	Staff member of Eden Community Outdoors.	Mentor and host community member at Gillerthwaite.
Martin (M)	Young person from Prince's Trust.	Attended first Camas retreat.

Code <i>cont.</i>	Association with Stoneleigh Group partners <i>cont.</i>	Role in Stoneleigh Project <i>cont.</i>
Mary (F)	MO4's three year old daughter.	Attended the Gillerthwaite retreat and follow up.
Matt (M)	Camas resident and gardener.	Host community member.
Max (M)	Camas committee member and resident on Iona.	Provided boat trips for Camas guests.
Neil (M)	Advisory Committee member of Camas.	N/A.
Nick (M)	Senior manager of the Prince's Trust. Member of the forum.	N/A.
Paul (M)	Young person from Endeavour Training.	Attended the first Camas retreat.
Phil (M)	Retired director of Endeavour Training and the Arthur Rank Centre.	Co-founder with C01 of the Stoneleigh Project
Rose (F)	Young person from Endeavour Training.	Young person on two programmes (Camas), then host community member and finally a mentor (Cae Mabon).
Sarah (F)	Young person from Weston Spirit.	Attended a retreat as a young person (Camas) and a second as a host community member (Cae Mabon). She also trained as a mentor.
Shaun (M)	Member of staff from Endeavour Training and management team member.	Mentor at Camas, Cae Mabon and Gillerthwaite.
Steve (M)	Young person from Endeavour Training.	Attended two of the retreats at Camas, and then became a host community member and attended mentor training.

Code <i>cont.</i>	Association with Stoneleigh Group partners <i>cont.</i>	Role in Stoneleigh Project <i>cont.</i>
Tom (M)	Young person from the Prince's Trust.	Attended the Gillerthwaite retreat.
Trevor (M)	Young person from Eden Community Outdoors.	Attended the Gillerthwaite retreat.

Appendix 2:

Sources of Evidence Used in this Thesis

The evidence referred to in this thesis is recorded securely in hard copy or electronically. The types of data, the sources, the file numbers and the dates of origin are represented in the coding listed below. The following notes explain how to interpret the codes. The codes are used in the text to source quotes from the evidence without breaking confidentiality agreements. All the evidence listed below is held with the written consent of the sources concerned for use within the context of this research.

Key: type of data

N	General notes made by the researcher.
FN	Field notes made by the researcher.
PD	Personal diaries kept by participants.
E-M	E-mails sent to the researcher
Rec	Recordings made by the researcher in the field.
I	Interviews conducted by the researcher.
FG	Transcripts of focus groups conducted by the researcher.
CD	Course documents produced by the Stoneleigh Group.
D	Documents produced by the Stoneleigh Group.
M	Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meetings.
L	Letters from representatives of the Stoneleigh Group partners tabled at meetings and entered into the minutes.
R	Project Reports to the Stoneleigh Group from the facilitator and the evaluator plus reports to Stoneleigh Group partner organisations. Published forum and conference reports.

Key: sources

SG	Material produced, edited, and approved by the Stoneleigh Group management team.
Part	Material that contains data from a group of participants.
	Other codes refer to participants listed in Appendix 1.

Evidence Coded

Understanding the code:

N[type of data]-C01[source. See Appendix 1](01[file number]98[year(s) in which collected])

- N-C01(0198) Notes from meeting with C01, Sept. 1998
- N-C01(0299) Notes from meeting with C01, Feb. 1999
- D-R01(0300) R01's Vision Statement, Endeavour Training, 2000
- CD-SG(0400) Joining instructions for participants in the first retreat, Stoneleigh Group, 2000
- FN-C05(0500) Field notes from the evaluation of Camas, 2000
- FN-C05(0600) Field notes from the first Stoneleigh Project retreat at Camas, Sept. 2000
- R-S02(0700) Report from the Stoneleigh Project retreat held at Camas, Sept. 2000
- R-S02(0800) The Camas Experience 2000. Report, Stoneleigh Group, 2000
- M-SG(0900) Minutes of meeting held to review the first retreat, Stoneleigh Group, 2000
- R-C05(1000) Evaluation report of the first round of piloting, Stoneleigh Group, 2000
- R-SG(1100) Young People's Empowerment Project. Forum report, Stoneleigh Group, 2000
- L-R01(1200) R01's letter to S02, 2000
- M-SG(1300) Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meeting, Nov. 2000
- M-SG(1400) Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meeting, Dec. 2000
- D-SG(1501) The first funding proposal, Stoneleigh Group, 2001
- D-SG(1601) Evaluation brief, Stoneleigh Group, 2001
- D-J02(1701) Young Leader Training Programme Proposal by J02, Stoneleigh Group, 2001
- M-SG(1801) Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meeting, Mar. 2001
- M-SG(1901) Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meeting, May 2001
- M-SG(2001) Minutes of Stoneleigh Group meeting, Oct. 2001

- CD-SG(2101) Briefing notes for young people, Stoneleigh Group, 2001
- FN-C05(2101) Field notes from Stoneleigh Project retreat held at Camas 15th–21st Sept. 2001
- R-S02(2301) Report from the Stoneleigh Project retreat held at Camas 15th–21st Sept. 2001
- PD-M07(2401) M07's diary, Camas retreat, 2001
- R-S02(2501) Feedback from the retreats, 2001
- R-C06(2601) The Camas Experience. Report to Weston Spirit, C05, 2001
- R-C05(2701) The Future Course of Spirituality, C05, 2001
- L-R01(2801) R01's letter to Foundation for Adventure, 2001
- L-C01(2901) C01's letter to the Stoneleigh Group. Rank Foundation, 2001
- R-C05(3001) Evaluation report from the second round of piloting, Stoneleigh Group, 2001
- CD-SG(3202) Briefing notes for young people, Stoneleigh Group, 2002
- R-S02(3302) Feedback from participants on retreat in 2002, Threshold, 2002
- PD-S02(3402) S02's notes, Camas retreats 2002
- D-SG(3502) The second funding proposal to the Rank Foundation, Stoneleigh Group, 2002
- FN-C05(3600-04) Field notes from the meetings of the Stoneleigh Group 2000–2004
- M-SG(3702) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Feb. 2002
- M-SG(3802) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Mar. 2002
- M-SG(3902) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Apr. 2002
- M-SG(4002) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, May 2002
- M-SG(4102) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Oct. 2002
- R-S03(4202) The Camas Presentation, S03, 2002
- M-SG(4302) Minutes of the meeting to write the second funding proposal, Stoneleigh Group, 2002
- I-S01(4403) Interview with S01 of Eden Community Outdoors, 2003
- FN-C05(4502-03) Field notes from the Stoneleigh Project programmes 2002–2003
- R-SG(4602) Stoneleigh Group Forum report, 2002
- R-C05(4702) Evaluation report from the third round of piloting, Stoneleigh Group, 2002
- L-R01(4802) R01's letter to Gen. A Denaro, 2002

- FN-C05(4903-04) Field notes from the Stoneleigh Project programmes 2003–2004
- M-SG(5003) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Jan. 2003
- CD-SG(5103) Briefing notes to new Stoneleigh Group member organisations, Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- CD-SG(5203) Briefing notes for mentors, Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- CD-SG(5303) Briefing notes for young people, Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- FG-Part(5403) Spirituality: Transcripts from the focus groups at the Global Retreat Centre, 2003
- FG-Part(5503) Mastery: Transcripts from the focus groups at the Global Retreat Centre, 2003
- FN-C05(5603) Field notes from focus groups held at the Global Retreat Centre, 2003
- PD-J01(5703) Personal Diary, J01, Cae Mabon, 2003
- D-J03(5803) Notes from Forum meeting, Stoneleigh Group, July 2003
- D-J03(5903) Notes from the forum values discussion, Stoneleigh Group, July 2003
- D-SG(6003) Young Volunteer Training and Spirit Based Leadership, R01, Report from Stoneleigh Group Forum, Stoneleigh Group, July 2003
- R-S02(6103) Report from retreats 2002/2003, Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- R-C05(6203) Report of Evaluation Work for the Stoneleigh Project, Threshold, 2003
- R-C05(6303) The Stoneleigh Project Evaluation. Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- R-C05(6403) Management Report, Stoneleigh Group, 2003
- I-Part(6503) Database of telephone interviews with young people, 2003
- R-C06(6603) Spirituality and Young People, C06, Weston Spirit, 2003
- M-SG(6704) Minutes of the Stoneleigh Group meeting, Mar. 2004
- CD-SG(6804) Briefing notes for young people, Stoneleigh Group, 2004
- D-SG(6904) Briefing for the Evaluation Report, Stoneleigh Group, 2004
- Rec-Part(7004) Recording of Gillerthwaite follow up: Journey sticks, 2004
- FG-Part(7104) Recording of Gillerthwaite follow up: focus group, 2004
- I-C03(7204) Interview with C03, Threshold, 2004
- R-SG(7304) Personal Values in Youth Work Development. Report of the Invitation Conference, Stoneleigh Group, May 2004
- R-C05(7404) Developing Human Agency: The Stoneleigh Group Interim Report, Threshold, 2004

- D-SG(7504) The Stoneleigh Project: proposals for phase 3 2004–2007, The Wrekin Trust, 2004
- E-M-R03(7604) E-mails from R03, 2004
- E-M-C02(7704) E-mail from C02, 2004
- E-M-S03(7804) E-mails from S03, 2004
- E-M-J01(7904) E-mail from J01, 2004
- E-M-J03(8004) E-mails from J03, 2004
- R-S02(8104) Presentation to the University for Spirit Forum, 2004
- I-M01(8202) Interview after Camas retreat in 2001

Appendix 3:

A Personal Narrative in the Context of the Study of

The Stoneleigh Project

Introduction

The purpose of this appendix is to provide a reflexive account of aspects of my personal and professional history in order to provide some insight into the views that I am conscious of holding that have an influence on how I understand and interpret the Stoneleigh Project. The study of the Stoneleigh Group involves thinking about knowledge and power in an informal education context. The participants are understood by the Stoneleigh Group as young people in transition from youth to adult. The development of my own values as a young person at the same stage in my life were also influential on my relationships with power in educational and work settings. How I understand myself and how I think about the topics of knowledge, power, communities, and the outdoors in informal education are all interpreted through these lenses. This biography therefore has an influence on the values I hold in relation to my work as an outdoor educator and these studies as an academic.

My work as an outdoor educator involved me for over thirty years in various outdoor projects concerning youth development. This continued a practical engagement with these topics and led in part to my choice of study for this thesis. It also colours the narratives I choose and the way I interpret them. I will conclude by outlining how my interest in this study arose from this background.

Childhood

My parents were both displaced by the Second World War. My father was evacuated at 12 to the New Forest from Norwich and never went to live at home again joining the Royal Navy just as the war ended. After two years as a bank clerk my mother joined the Wrens at 17, also in the last half of the war, and likewise never lived at home again. For my parents,

as well as for myself as a child in a naval family, fragmented social networks were very familiar.

My earliest memories are of sitting on various yachts sailing along the Devon coast. These are followed by images of gardens, seaside, and moorland adjacent to our various homes and out into which I went with my brother and the neighbours' children whenever we could. Naval life led us to move house every three years or so. I have no visual memories of family until after puberty.

My father was at sea most of my childhood. My mother looked after us. My parents chose villages in which to live deliberately so that we could have the run of the neighbourhood; a Cornish seaside village, a house on the edge of Dartmoor, another backing on to deciduous woods in Kent, and then a house at the foot of Cheddar Gorge in the Mendips. I became used to making and then losing friendship networks. We had no television until I was seven by which time I was too interested in other activities to pay it much attention. Although mostly my mother raised me the existence of a father and his globetrotting exploits were constantly in front of me. He was a big influence on me especially during his brief visits home.

I was not christened, a deliberate act on my parents' part. They felt it should be a decision I took for myself when I was old enough to make it. We never went to church as a family though as a young teenager I sang in the church choir for the pleasure of singing and the pocket money. This is an early sign that my parents, perhaps along with many others, had a different sense of the future. Established cultural norms could be different and it was seen by them as not their place to make those decisions on behalf of their children. A significant element in building an identity had been transferred from my parents as guardians of their community's values to me. It may be that because they were displaced from their communities as young adults they felt a greater sense of authority to question established norms as a result.

My father did establish my first and most persistent hobbies. On a longer visit home than was normal, when I was nine, he told me I should take up some hobbies. Within the space of a few months, and at his suggestion, I took up gardening and bird watching. Both require a person to know their own patch intimately. I took enormous pride in this. At the age of 13 my patch was the southern slopes of part of the Mendip hills, including Cheddar Gorge, and the levels to the south of them. In that year the British Trust for Ornithology set out to produce the first atlas of British breeding birds. Birdwatchers were thin on the ground in rural Somerset. My adult bird watching mentors had no hesitation in giving me a ten kilometre patch and accepting my records for that area for the atlas data. When I produced no records for two rare species that they believed were breeding in the area I was sent back to try again. My conclusion was that, at this time, one did and one did not breed. This result was also accepted without question. I still occasionally look up the page for Cirl Bunting in the atlas and check the red dot that states that this bird did in fact breed on my patch. I look with equal pride on the blank on the same patch for Raven.

An interest in, and respect for, my own local knowledge has perhaps been a result. I have a tendency to apply my personally experienced view of the world to a wider world, perhaps counter to the experience of others. One of my geography teachers was at the receiving end of this 'arrogance' during a disagreement about how clouds moved. My evidence was empirical and available for all to see out of the classroom window. Hers was quoted from a book. I have yet to reconcile the possibility that I was right in practice whilst she was right in principle. It remains counter-intuitive and theoretical and so less reliable in my mind.

I was expected to get a part time job as soon as I was old enough. The notion of a work ethic was certainly a value that was being upheld. I delivered meat for a butcher and then worked all season round with a strawberry grower; a job that suited me very well. The personal knowledge of a farmer who knew his land, his crop, his market, and his workers impressed me. This was stuff you couldn't find in books.

Before the war both my parents held casual jobs and put the money into the housekeeping. When he was evacuated my father caught snakes and sold them for their venom. He

financed his leisure and personal needs from the money he made. I was expected to use the money I earned to finance my leisure interests. It bought and ran a motorbike that gave me an unusual degree of freedom for a teenager in my village.

I avoided some school trips, especially field trips, much to the consternation of my teachers. I did go hill walking with the school twice following the teachers blindly wherever they took us. I loved the exercise, the mist shrouded views, and the feel of rock. It was a sensual delight. As a sixth former I also went on retreat to a convent. I loved the open-minded and openhearted philosophical debate with monks, nuns, and my peers.

My experience of youth work came in the form of Venture Scouting. This was an unconventional experience with a charismatic leader who attracted boys with no interest in uniforms and badges but a great deal of energy for outdoor and social activities. I may have acquired the conventions of the various activities we practised; caving, climbing, camping, hill walking, archery and so on, but I did not acquire a conventional approach to leadership. Our Venture Scout leader led the first caving trip I went on. It was also his first caving trip. We approached everything we did in the same way. If a boy made a suggestion about where to go or something to do then that became our plan. Within a year, at 16, I was leading Cubs (children aged nine or ten) on caving trips.

With my parents breaking with tradition by moving away from home to work, moving us to a new home every three years, an absent father, adults who trusted the knowledge of a child, and a leader who broke with the established practices of an organisation as established as the Scout Movement, my experiences were of conventions regularly broken. I was increasingly aware of this until, by Venture Scouting days, I took pride in it. Breaking with tradition suited the purposes of my youth transition yet it was accomplished within the structure of an extended network of adult support. Even when I was less aware, my expectations of how things should be were based on my own experience and so were sometimes unconventional for my age group, sex, and class.

This creative work applied largely to my leisure time. As someone who had no established roots in one place or with one community, creating relationships with people and landscapes was something I was used to doing. There is a difference in the way this works for a 'rolling stone'. The implicit knowledge or informal network of indigenous villagers is replaced by explicit knowledge of the landscape acquired through a hobby and a more formal set of relations established through work and leisure time clubs rather than through neighbours and extended families. This approach has much in common with the individualised management of transition now being reported for a wider range of young people.

My parents were rising through the middle classes and, once the eleven plus was hurdled, the path was set, O- and A-levels willing, on higher education; a new trajectory for both sides of my family. I had no career in mind and, as with my choice of religion, my parents saw this as a choice for me to make. The only contribution my parents made, other than being good listeners and in full support of my ideas, was to suggest I join the navy or be an accountant. Both were suggested in order to put me off the idea of either. I took a subject, geology, simply because it caught my imagination. Whilst the degree path was new to our family it was a well-worn path for others and so was easy to follow. Our affluence coupled with post-war educational policies and the new, post-war optimism had opened the door to a growing middle class.

Professional life

I think of my development as nearly stalling at 20 when I graduated. My parents found me a job and I was displaced enough to have no other leads (my parents moved away from the West Country to Essex the month I went to university and I went home as little as possible). Later conversations with my university friends suggest that many of us found this step difficult. In one sense all the stepping stones were in place; profession, marriage, homeowner, then family. In another our experience was somehow incomplete. We were looking for more personal development. We were not brave enough or inclined to 'drop out' and the gap year and backpacker's trail had not yet developed. Work was still constructed as a career or profession for life. Most of us opted for convention with an uneasy sense of dissatisfaction.

I became a teacher without any training in the last year in which this was possible for a graduate. I joined the school as the leaving age was raised from 15 to 16. It was an old secondary modern school just shifting to comprehensive. As a result it had a strong pastoral system and was shocked by the truancy that resulted from the rise in the leaving age.

The role models around me were deeply caring professionals. Their expectations of the students were high in moral terms and hopeful but not pushy academically; a typical secondary modern. Sufficient discipline was provided to make a classroom environment functional. Taken outside of this on the sports field or a field trip it was clear these teachers liked the students they worked with and tended to see things from their point of view rather more than the stereotype of teachers might suggest. As a secondary modern in origin a high value was still placed on practical subjects and approaches.

I was asked to set up a truancy prevention programme based on outdoor activities. As the head teacher pointed out he was not in any way an outdoor enthusiast. His belief was in optimising the potential of enthusiastic teachers; as I had outdoor skills and was thought of as someone who could relate to boys with negative attitudes to school he simply capitalised on that.

Even in such a caring environment the kind of relationship that enables outdoor education to work still needed some help. The liminal space was provided in the form of the potting shed of the old rural studies programme. It had become the smokers' corner, out of sight of the rest of the school behind the gym. Somehow, the outdoor gear and I became accepted in this space and not viewed as trespassers. Once the students' ties came off first names were standard. Yet, after two years of participation in the outdoor programme, not once in the ten years I ran it did a boy or girl leave his or her tie off or use my first name once back around the corner and into the gym corridor.

The programme was credited with reducing the truancy rate by 90 percent. I think this may have been more to do with the fact that, the second year the programme ran, the students

had more time to get used to the idea of staying on to 16. Local employers had also got used to the idea of taking these young people on a year later. In any case not long after that jobs for young people started to decline and staying at school became the only choice for most young people.

However, the programme can certainly take the credit for the second effect. These young people, who had been labelled 'non-exam', started passing CSE English Language. They were writing and talking about their outdoor experiences. Over ten years my team raised the school's expectations of these young people from no results to an average of three CSE passes. An informal education strategy affected attendance and performance in a formal educational setting and influenced post-school pathways to college and employment. Anecdotal evidence from the local police service also suggested that petty crime rates were lowered.

Post-graduate study

At 25 I took a year's paid sabbatical to study adventure education full time for a postgraduate qualification at Charlotte Mason College. Colin Mortlock and Jack Parker taught it. As role models they were passionate individualists. Although Colin had developed his personal philosophy into an educational approach (Mortlock, 1984) it was founded on his own world-view and you were either drawn to work with him or not. Initially an enthusiast for his ideas I later became an enthusiast for valuing the approach of each person, much as my first head teacher had done when he set me on the road to outdoor education.

At this point my own development seemed to reawaken. My peers and teachers on the course became friends and, for the first time since leaving university, I became active in my leisure time outside of a small circle of old university friends. I began to look for a new job working full time in the outdoors. It took five years, largely because the outdoor centres I visited had cultures that placed the activities and not young people at the centre of their work. Most of them ran a more disciplined and unforgiving regime than the school and the instructing was unfriendly. I eventually found Brathay, where the young people

were treated like young adults and were located at the centre of the courses being offered. I worked in the new youth development team. Our brief was to work with as wide a range of young people as possible and to be as creative as we could with our course designs. Later we were asked to disseminate our work to other practitioners. It was this that began my interest in providing a consultancy service for professional and programme development.

A year of personal development afforded by higher education with the support of Essex County Council had a significant impact on my values. My attitudes to family, work, leisure, and property all shifted in that year. A question about the meaning of my life, somehow implicitly asked by my teenage upbringing, was resolved and enacted with the consequent impacts on the conventions of family and profession. My biography shifted into the patterns of the new trends of the time instead of remaining in the groove of tradition. I divorced, moved sideways into work without a career path, worked for less income, and then became self employed.

It was Colin Mortlock who suggested I start a professional magazine for the outdoor education field. He added that I was the first ‘academic’ the course had produced. The magazine evolved into *The Journal for Adventure Education and Outdoor Leadership*, which I edited for 15 years. This gave me opportunities to meet other people writing about and studying the outdoor education field. It also gave me a chance to visit practice in other countries where I was often asked to comment critically on practice in the UK. Colin Mortlock’s comment together with invitations to lecture in universities abroad made me curious about academic work. This led to a lecturing post at Edinburgh University and now at St. Martin’s College (the new name for the college I had studied at) on the courses that developed from the course I had taken when I was 25.

From my perspective modern British life is not an established order out of which our culture is currently breaking. The post-war years feel like a time of change between a pre-war set of conventions disrupted by the war and unsure of their relevance and an emerging post-war culture founded on optimism, physical and social mobility, and an increasingly rapidly changing socio-economic context. As an educator in my early 50s I understand

myself as the holder of a set of values amongst a wider set of complementary and conflicting values that make this culture. I have seen it as my role to represent these values in my work. Lately, I have seen it as also important to critique these values and to be more prudent about those I hold. It is this reflexive element as well as my continued curiosity for outdoor education practice that reflects the values that underlie this study.

As this case study is introduced and unfolds I would like the reader to hold in mind the links between my personal and professional history and my interpretation and critique of the context in which the people who are the subject of this study reside. At this point I will consider the early development of my research interest which is also informed by this narrative.

My research interests

This research is influenced by my own interests as much as by the interests of the Stoneleigh Group as outlined in Chapter 2 or the views of certain authors on the desirable nature and direction for outdoor education research as discussed in Chapter 3. As an untutored outdoor educator I developed, as I have outlined above, a student-centred, community-based approach to working with teenagers. This I later found to be at odds with much of mainstream outdoor education practice which I also found to be dissatisfying. My work, and now my research, has always revolved around understanding, developing, and advocating for what appeared to me to be normal but were understood by others to be liberal or even radical practices. I have written several papers in which I have explored my thinking about outdoor education as it has emerged from these experiences (Loynes, 1998; Loynes, 2002; Loynes, 2005). These were philosophical and critical in approach and largely constructed from my own professional experience and the accounts of other professionals without any rigorous underpinning.

I am also interested in constructing new approaches to working out of doors as well as deconstructing some of the structural elements of traditional practice in order to consider and develop its value for current provision. This has led my consultancy services into staff- and programme-development projects and, lately, into evaluative work. As I began to work

in an academic world and thought more about the best ways in which I as a researcher could support the field I wanted a stronger position from which to voice my ideas. My early research and evaluation efforts were embarked on in order to develop my capacity for rigorous and critical thinking and writing as well as to develop my research aims for this study.

As an educator with strongly held values around student-centred learning it is not surprising that I was drawn to methodological approaches such as participative enquiry (Reason, 1994) for the evaluative projects I undertook. This also suited the interests of the Stoneleigh Group, both in relation to the kind of experience they wanted the evaluation to be, and for the kind of understanding of their work they were hoping to generate.

During the first phase of evaluation for the Stoneleigh Group I became interested in how a sociological and critical perspective could inform this study and a wider understanding of outdoor experiential learning. I therefore set out to develop this study from a critical perspective.

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